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This is the Council’s fifth Annual Scrutiny Report which is produced each year to set out the work, achievements and impact of the Overview and Scrutiny function at Chesterfield. The year 2009/10 was perhaps our busiest and most productive year to date - all the issues covered and the detail of our work is provided in the following pages. As usual towards the end of the report we have included some of our plans for the forthcoming year to continue to build on the good work achieved and to continue to strengthen our role in local governance through:

- ensuring accountability through challenge of decisions and actions;
- influencing policy development and service delivery;
- challenge of providers of public services external to the Council;
- ensuring best quality and value through good performance and finance management.

There have been a number of key and very different pieces of scrutiny work undertaken during 2009/10. In last year’s report we emphasised the changing nature of public service delivery and the need for those delivering public service to work together better to address complex social issues that cross area and organisational boundaries. In support of this Scrutiny has continued to develop its external focus commencing its inquiry into Health Inequality and how this is influenced by social factors. We have also continued to monitor progress in the delivery of recommendations from our previous, cross cutting work on Alcohol and Young People. The work of the Taxis and Town Centres Scrutiny Review Panel is another key piece of work completed this year. The findings of this review have strongly influenced the direction of Council policy relating to the licensing of Hackney Carriages and Council communications with the taxi trade. A further, very different piece of scrutiny work was the overview and scrutiny of the Council’s proposals to enter into a Public / Private Partnership for the delivery of a number of its core corporate services. Ultimately this scrutiny work involved ensuring as far as possible that the decision was the right decision for the Council, its employees and the people of Chesterfield in ensuring continued quality and good value services.

The work of Scrutiny continues to evolve taking ever different approaches to its work to help ensure the best decisions are made for, and services delivered to, the Chesterfield community. We are particularly pleased this year with the number and variety of Scrutiny reviews undertaken and our aspiration is to continue to achieve even more in the future. As last year we are still proud to help lead the way for change in Chesterfield both within our own organisation and also with our partners, and to help promote and strengthen the role of the Council as community leader. Again our thanks and appreciation must go to all those individuals and organisations we have worked with during the year and we look forward to working with you again in the future.
Comments from the Chief Executive

I am very pleased to add my endorsement to this report. It is a sign of the dedication, commitment and experience of members that every possible aspect of Scrutiny’s essential role in local government is evidenced in the following pages – from pre-Cabinet decision to post Cabinet decision (‘call-in’) scrutiny, from investigative review of existing Council policies and practices to inquisitive tracking of key Council projects, and from holding Cabinet Members and senior officers to account on the budget and organisational performance to recommending new policies and practices.

The breadth of subject matter that has been before the Council’s two Scrutiny Committees in 2009/10 is equally impressive, and relevant to delivery of the Council’s vision and long-term priorities.

The Scrutiny Board has enthusiastically picked up new challenges, e.g. fulfilling the role of Statutory Crime and Disorder Committee, and has been recognised by its peers as worthy of investment and support as part of a national project to look at the role of Scrutiny in improving health and reducing health inequalities. This is good news for our residents.

The work of Scrutiny members on joint committees with neighbouring Councils is also very commendable and sensible where there are matters of common concern to all, e.g. the relationship between alcohol and young people. In this regard, a development of particular note is the practice of conducting joint spotlight reviews, which includes a 1-day intensive evidence gathering process, to look at the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of shared services.

The Efficiency and Best Value Scrutiny Panel continues to play an important role in supporting the Council to demonstrate value for money. Without its supportive challenge, we would find it harder to meet the Government’s stretching efficiency targets and to produce a balanced budget position both now and in the future.

My congratulations and thanks therefore to all involved, both members and officers, in the various Scrutiny work activities and in the preparation of this impressive report. I wish Scrutiny Members well with their work in 2010/11.

Huw Bowen
Chief Executive
3 The Scrutiny Board’s Work and Achievements

Taxis and Town Centre Safety Scrutiny Review Panel

Councillor Denise Hawksworth
Review Panel Chair

The Scrutiny Board appointed the Taxis and Town Centre Safety Scrutiny Panel to look into:

- communication and consultation issues with the Chesterfield taxi trade; and

- the current council policy of delimitation of the numbers of Hackney Carriage Vehicles to ensure that Chesterfield residents are receiving the best possible service within existing budget restraints.

The final report was presented to the Scrutiny Board in February 2010 and can be accessed via the Council’s website.

Achievements:

The Scrutiny Panel’s recommendations, supported by the Scrutiny Board were that:

1. The Council appoint a permanent Consultative Committee to consult with the taxi trade on taxi matters - such a Committee to include Members of this Scrutiny Review Panel as elected representatives of the Consultative Committee to meet either whenever necessary or quarterly, which appears to be the norm in those authorities we have looked at although several meet on a 6 monthly basis.

2. The Scrutiny Board recommends that Cabinet support the need for an immediate Unmet Demand Survey and agrees to the allocation of required funds, to be recouped from increased HCV licence fees.

In response to the Panel’s report and recommendations the Council’s Appeals and Regulatory Committee has in principle approved the undertaking of an independent survey to help assess hackney carriage demand in Chesterfield and also supports the formation of a taxi consultative committee.

The Cabinet have also approved necessary funding to commission the recommended demand survey without delay and has also confirmed support for a taxi consultative committee.

Full Council is now scheduled to confirm arrangements for the creation of such a consultative committee.
Chesterfield Scrutiny Review Panel on Corporate Services Public Private Partnership (PPP) Proposals

Councillor Bridget Dunks
Review Panel Chair

In December 2008 a request was received to call-in the Cabinet’s decision to support the procurement process for a public/private partnership (PPP) arrangement to deliver a number of the Council’s corporate services. In considering the call-in request the Scrutiny Board did not request Cabinet to reconsider its decision but did appoint a Scrutiny Panel in January 2009 to oversee the procurement process (see Annual Scrutiny Report for 2008/09). The Scrutiny Panel’s remit was to:

- Further examine and investigate the existing proposals, as considered achievable and beneficial;
- Monitor and scrutinise further actions and decisions made as proposals move forward and consider whether long term benefits continue to be worthwhile;
- Examine whether the transfer of employees and services to a private sector deliverer would detrimentally affect the quality and standard of service delivery;
- Put forward any alternative options that the panel feels warrants further formal consideration and make appropriate recommendations to Cabinet based on that evidence;
- Raise issues and concerns identified with the executive for consideration and response throughout the review;
- Ensure that individuals affected by the proposals have had the opportunity to raise issues and concerns and feel they have been answered in the interest of transparency and

The Scrutiny Panel continued to monitor and scrutinise the project as it moved forward during 2009/10. To ensure good transparency and accountability the Panel felt it was necessary, given the very technical and specialist nature of outsourcing services, that it needed to commission its own specialist expert advice dedicated to supporting the scrutiny process.

Subsequently the Panel were successful in securing expert support and advice from the Local Partnerships group and the Improvement and Development Agency, negotiated via funding from the East Midlands Region Improvement and Efficiency Partnership.

The procurement project itself continues beyond the current municipal year to conclude October 2010. The overviewing work of this Scrutiny Panel therefore also continues and the Panel’s conclusions and achievements will be presented in next year’s Annual Scrutiny Report.
Health Inequalities Scrutiny Review Panel

Councillor Jane Collins
Review Panel Chair

In October 2009 the Scrutiny Board agreed to submit a funding bid to the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) for support to undertake a scrutiny review into health inequalities through an initiative run by the Department of Health. The application was very successful in acquiring funding and expert advisor support for a year long scrutiny project to conclude November 2010.

As a result of the successful bid Chesterfield Borough Council has also been awarded CfPS Development Area Status 2010. This means the learning from this District Council scrutiny project will be used by CfPS to develop a national scrutiny toolkit to enable other councils to undertake reviews into health equity.

The review has a specific focus on influencing improved health in the Rother Ward, which includes the areas of St Augustines, Birdholme and Boythorpe, falling within the top 10% of most deprived areas in England and the most deprived in Chesterfield.

Alongside the Council's services, the project is supported by a number of key partners including:

- Derbyshire County Primary Care Trust
- CHART Local Strategic Partnership (for Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire)
- Communities that Work! (Chesterfield)
- Adult Community Education and Social Services, Derbyshire County Council
- Derbyshire Constabulary
- Chesterfield Citizens Advice Bureau
- Connexions
- Links CVS
- Community Forum for the Rother Ward

Key aims for the project are:

- To gather information about behaviour and lifestyles in Rother to enable better targeted and prioritised service provision to improve health and wellbeing that is needs based.

- To enable Rother residents alongside the organisations which support them to influence appropriate service redesign to improve health and wellbeing by:

  - Gathering information about existing strengths or assets in the area, the building blocks for health and wellbeing, alongside information about behaviour and lifestyles;
  - Identifying a shared vision for health and wellbeing.

The project is ongoing – conclusions and achievements will be reported in next year’s Annual Scrutiny Report.
Litter Scrutiny Review Panel

Councillor Roy Pastoll
Review Panel Chair

A Scrutiny Review Panel was appointed to look into litter nuisance with the following aims and objectives:

- To investigate whether existing policies, practice and procedures can be improved to help reduce litter and the effects of litter across the borough.
- To reduce litter around schools, shops and fast food outlets in residential areas.
- To reduce litter in the town centre.
- To consider the potential impact of amending the existing litter enforcement policy to include fixed penalty notices to young people from 11 years of age.
- To look into the current practice and procedure for doorstep recycling collection.

Achievements:

An initial report was concluded in November 2009. The Panel found that the current practice, procedure and performance for the doorstep recycling service to be of a good standard. The Panel also made the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1. That the Head of Environment continue to work with internal audit to ensure that the measurement of litter levels and data collection processes comply with required standards.
2. Cabinet agree to consider use of the participatory budgeting initiative to re-allocate some funds to Community Forums to enable them to help prioritise and address litter issues in their own community areas.
3. The Spire Pride Hotline is promoted for the reporting of litter issues.
4. That Community Forums be consulted on and involved in the introduction of Street Pride Champions for their community areas and the Head of Environment produce relevant guidance for such Champions.
5. Street Banners be erected on principal traffic routes to promote the Spire Pride Hotline and seasonal campaign messages.
6. Gum Boards in the town centre are relaunched alongside a campaign to highlight the damage caused by discarded gum.
7. The Youth Offending Service, Schools and Colleges be consulted on the options to deal with juvenile litter and a further report brought to Cabinet for consideration.
8. Ensure procedures are in place to allow alternative punishments to be available as an option to avoid as far as possible17 year olds acquiring a criminal record when issued with a fixed penalty notice.
9. That Cabinet now implement its decision of December 2008 which authorised Housing Rangers and the Safer Neighbourhoods Team to issue fixed penalty notices.
10. The Chief Constable of Police be invited to review the current policy of not authorising Police Constable Special Officers to issue fixed penalty notices for litter dropping.
11. Schools and colleges be contacted to encourage their use of behaviour codes for litter (or include littering in their existing behaviour codes) and to encourage involvement in litter picks and clean ups.
12. Ongoing proactive engagement with schools and their pupils be organised to raise
awareness of the various environmental and other impacts of littering and help influence behaviour change.

13. Derbyshire County Council be invited to comment on its approach to deal with overgrown hedges on the highway and that this be included in future strategy.

14. That ‘Food on the Go’ establishments be requested to take more responsibility for litter around their premises.

15. That awareness raising regarding problems that can be caused by bird feeding be included in future campaigns undertaken by the Council.

16. That the Head of Environment look into the individual issues and requests raised via the scrutiny questionnaire to community forums considered to fall within routine service delivery.

The report and recommendations were considered by Cabinet in March 2010 where it was resolved:-

1. That the initial report on the Scrutiny Review into Litter is welcomed and the Review Panel thanked for their work.

2. That the Scrutiny Review Panel be asked to consider the following additional matters as part of their work to complete the Scrutiny Review:

(a) factors determining the deployment of street scene and landscape services resources to deal with litter;

(b) provision of litter bins, particularly the types of bins provided and their locations;

(c) promotion of Spirepride’s activities and methods which could be employed to raise the profile of the service.

3. That the final report on the Scrutiny Review into Litter be presented to Cabinet simultaneously with a report, to be prepared by the Head of Environment, on implications for service delivery which might result from the adoption of recommendations made by the Scrutiny Review Panel.

Forward Plan Pre-Decision Scrutiny - Sale of a Housing Property

A standing item on the Scrutiny Board meeting 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 Board with the opportunity to undertake scrutiny of a matter before a formal decision is made upon that matter, and to then make recommendations to influence the decision.

The Forward Plan must also contain those key decisions to be made which are exempt from public access and to be made in private.

In March 2010 the Scrutiny Board investigated proposals for the sale of a particular housing property. Scrutiny Members were not satisfied with the reasons given for disposal of the property. The details of the proposals were exempt from public access to information and therefore scrutiny of the matter was also undertaken in
private as disclosure of the details was not considered to be in the public interest.

Consideration of the matter also raised issues regarding Forward Plan content and communication with Members on Ward issues before decisions are made. Following the Scrutiny Board’s investigation of the proposals for the sale of this particular property, a report with the recommendation not to sell was submitted to Cabinet. The Scrutiny Board’s report recommended the following:

1. That Cabinet is requested to retain the property within the housing stock and refurbish the property in some form.

2. That in view of the importance of the Forward Plan in the scrutiny process the Scrutiny Board set up a review panel to consider the process followed within the council to produce the Plan and consider the information format within the Plan.

3. Cabinet is requested to draw together a set of protocols that should be followed to keep local ward members and back bench members consulted on decisions within the council and which should:

   (a) Advise officers on when to consult members and when to inform;

   (b) Take into account the level of consultation / information needed (as it would be unreasonable to expect officers to advise members of every small detail on a day to day basis; and

   (c) Draw to officer’s attention the importance of member involvement.

Cabinet resolved not to accept the scrutiny recommendation to retain the property. Cabinet also resolved that recommendations at (iii) above form part of the terms of reference for the forthcoming review of the Overview and Scrutiny function. The Scrutiny Board agreed to include recommendation (ii) above in its work programme for 2010/11.

Budget and Performance Scrutiny

The Board undertakes regular budget and performance scrutiny receiving and scrutinising comprehensive budget and performance Cabinet reports on a quarterly basis. The Leader, Chief Executive, Lead Members and Chief Officers are questioned on performance of their service areas and the budgets they are responsible for and on how they contribute to priorities for the Chesterfield community. In particular this year the Board scrutinised:

- Performance as measured in the Comprehensive Area Assessment for Chesterfield provided by the Audit Commission.

- Financial plans to address and manage cost impact of the new Concessionary Fares scheme.

- Performance on delivery of the Homelessness Action Plan following an inspection.

- General Housing Service performance.

- Performance against actions to deliver the adopted Equalities Framework.

Scrutiny will continue to monitor the financial position of the Council. Resulting from new national policies and other ongoing economic pressures, the Council, as with many others, is continually under financial pressure to find savings and continues to do so.
Statutory Right of Board Members to Raise Items for the Board Agenda

Grazing Licence Policy

Scrutiny legislation allows for a member of a statutory scrutiny committee, such as the Scrutiny Board, to ensure that a matter relevant to the committee’s functions is included in the meeting agenda and discussed. In December 2009 the matter of grazing licence policy was included on the Scrutiny Board agenda and received consideration.

The detail of the matter involved a specific licence and piece of grazing land. Though the Board would not be involved with decisions on individual licences, Members wished to give some consideration to the council’s overall policy to agreeing charges for such licences, given that a sudden large charge increase had been applied in this case. A report setting out the details as to why there had been no gradual increase of charges was considered by the Board. To conclude the Board provided a view on the charge increase policy, then referred the matter back to the responsible Lead Member for a decision on the individual licence concerned.

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Chesterfield Borough, North East Derbyshire and Bolsover District Councils’ Spotlight Review on the three Councils’ Joint Procurement Service

The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee was established in 2008 to monitor and scrutinise joint services delivered between the three Councils of Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire. In October 2009 it concluded its review of the Joint Procurement Service. A ‘spotlight’ approach was used to undertake the review which is explained further at Section 6.

The review aims were to:

- Establish the awareness of the shared procurement unit and use of the service
- Measure the satisfaction of users of the service
- Measure the effectiveness of the service
- Review the robustness of the processes used
- Measure whether equality, sustainability and accessibility were embedded within the service
- Establish whether the section provided value for money.

Achievements:

The following recommendations were reported to, and approved by, the Joint Executive of the three authorities:
1. That a strategy for the unit be produced to raise the profile and promote the service to officers and members across the three authorities and externally – the strategy to include the following elements:

- Roles and responsibilities of the unit
- Promotion to minority groups
- A programme of training and workshops on procurement including equality, sustainability and ethical procurement
- Awareness for officers in their induction programme
- Frequent reporting timetable of savings, performance and best practices
- Review and improvement of the website
- A review of the events, documents, support available for external users.

2. That a review of the vision for the unit be undertaken to move the unit to the next level to include:

- Culture change and consistency across the three authorities
- Exploration of opportunities to work with other councils, parish councils and capital work to maximise the use of our expertise
- Equality Impact Assessments to be used as a tool for procurement
- Review of the partnership to respond to the changing environment in the three authorities
- Analysis of the services required and contractors used by the three authorities to identify opportunities for joining contracts and economies of scale
- Prioritisation of work undertaken based on risk to the authority
- Consideration of cost against the benefit of additional staff resource to understand the value of increasing staffing within the team.

3. Investigate the potential to reduce the end to end time in the life of the contract to ensure all service areas support the process.

4. Introduce a review process at the end of the tendering exercise to identify improvement opportunities both internally and externally based on customer satisfaction.

5. Review the process and documentation with the end users to ensure the process is clear and user friendly.

6. Work be undertaken with managers to ensure they have the skills to effectively manage the operational delivery of the contract and any associated risks.

7. That conditions of contract be standardised across the three authorities where feasible.

8. That guidance be produced by the unit that sets out clearly the roles and responsibilities of the unit and officers using the service.

9. That each authority recognised and acknowledges that the procurement role is mobile rather than office based by promoting this way of working for the unit.
4 Impact on Service Delivery and Outcomes

Monitoring Action on Approved Scrutiny Recommendations:

The Scrutiny Board monitors progress of the implementation of all scrutiny recommendations 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. Ultimately this will ensure that the work of Scrutiny impacts on service delivery and that the benefits of scrutiny work are received by people in our community. This year the Scrutiny Board has continued to monitor progress on approved scrutiny recommendations from its:

- Alcohol and Young People Scrutiny Reviews
- Exit Interview Procedure Scrutiny Review
- Healthy Eating Scrutiny Review

Specific progress with implementation and action taken relating to the Alcohol and Young People scrutiny reviews is given below.

Alcohol and Young People Joint Scrutiny Review
(with Bolsover, North East Derbyshire and Derbyshire County Councils)

The Joint Scrutiny Panel on Alcohol and Young People made 9 recommendations to the Joint Executive (for Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire) which were approved and are detailed in the Annual Scrutiny Report 2008/09.

The aims of the joint review were to:
- Influence the reduction of alcohol related crime and anti social behaviour to improve wellbeing within the communities of Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire.
- Identify and reduce the impact of alcohol consumption by young people in our communities on their health, safety and wellbeing.
- Identify and influence measures to raise awareness of the impact of alcohol on young people in our communities.
- Influence policies, strategies and legislation to improve community wellbeing.

To date the following progress has been made in implementing the recommendations:

- The report has been endorsed by the four councils of Chesterfield, Bolsover, North
East Derbyshire and Derbyshire County to strengthen the existing joint strategy to reduce the impact of alcohol on young people and an implementation plan adopted to co-ordinate actions.

- Promotion of the issue and joint approach between the four Councils including publicity campaigns and inclusion in plans of the respective councils’ Community Safety Partnerships have been undertaken.

- The work has been received and considered by the Derbyshire Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy Group and has contributed to the development of the Derbyshire Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2009 - 13.

- The Derbyshire Police have amended their crime reporting procedure to include the collection and recording of data regarding alcohol related crime.

- The review has encouraged dialogue with Primary Care Trust and Chesterfield Hospital to consider introducing the collection and recording of alcohol related admissions.

Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership.

Through the Scrutiny Board the scrutiny review panel made 7 further recommendations which were approved by Cabinet. These are also detailed in last year’s Annual Scrutiny Report.

To date the following progress has been made in implementing these recommendations:

- Awareness training on the Council’s Crime and Disorder obligations required by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1989 has now been delivered.

- Partnership working between the Council and the Community Safety Partnership has improved.

- Self assessment of performance of the Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership is regularly undertaken.

- The preference for an independent Chair for the Chesterfield Violence, Alcohol and Licensing Group (VAL) to be appointed, is acknowledged.

- Relating to the Council’s Licensing Service, communication has been sent to the Government highlighting the need for direct grant and for increased fees for licensing applications to help meet increased service pressures arising from the Licensing Act 2003.

Progress is ongoing for both these reviews and further outcomes will be included in next year’s Annual Scrutiny Report.

Alcohol and Young People Chesterfield Review

To compliment the joint scrutiny work detailed above, the Chesterfield Alcohol and Young People Scrutiny Panel also conducted a review with a Chesterfield focus - the town having an attractive night time economy and being a hub to access alcohol for the other surrounding areas.

Alongside the wider aims of the joint review detailed above, the main objectives of this review were to:

- Examine actions specific to, and with the power of, Chesterfield Borough Council that could be taken to help address the issues associated with alcohol and young people.

- Make appropriate recommendations to Cabinet, Licensing Committee, Council and
5 Efficiency and Best Value Scrutiny Panel

In 2009/10 the Efficiency and Best Value Scrutiny Panel have been involved in a vast array of different projects. The requirements of Comprehensive Spending Review 07 (CRS07) and reporting of efficiencies secured that contribute to the Annual Efficiency Statement (AES) has remained a significant area of review.

2009/10 has also seen a focus on Value for Money and its impact upon the authorities Use of Resources, Comprehensive Area Assessment score, along with the introduction of improved performance management arrangements.

CSR07/AES & Efficiency Peer Review

The AES backward look for 2008/9 was completed and reported to the panel, this report highlighted that the council had exceeded its target savings for the year by 51% providing a return of £1,194,400 against a target of £790,000.

Best Value Review of Value for Money

The Best Value Review commissioned by the group during 2009/10 addressed the councils approach to Value for money and activity costing, the review was selected as a result of the audit commissions annual audit report which stated that although the council did well, achieving a 3 out of 4 score for use of resources, the approach to value for money was not consistent.

The scope of the review was ‘To review the current approach to and perception of VFM across CBC, highlight areas for improvement, ensuring compliance with Key lines of enquiry, and provide a framework, based on best practice, for a consistent approach to delivering VFM.

A report and action plan have been produced and approved by Cabinet. In addition an Efficiency and Value for Money Strategy has been produced and approved by Cabinet & Full Council.

Good progress has been made towards the actions, the majority of which are now complete. Further action plan progress reports will continue to be presented to Efficiency & Best Value Scrutiny Panel, along with reports summarising the results of the Value for Money assessments which are being conducted across the Council’s Services.

Council’s Performance Framework

During 2009/10 the Council has undergone a Corporate Management Restructure, following this restructure it was thought appropriate to introduce a new ‘fit for purpose’ performance arrangements to help the Council ‘step up a gear’ in this area.

The new performance management arrangements include:-

- The introduction of the Corporate Plan 2010-13
- New Service planning arrangements
- The implementation of Monthly Performance Clinics
- New Team Planning arrangements
- Updated Employee Performance Development reviews

The panel will continue to monitor developments in this area.

**Change Management Reports & Additional Reviews**

A number of reports have been considered by the panel which highlight changes in working practice which have resulted in, or are planned to secure, financial savings for the authority including:

- Security Services Arrangements at Pavements Shopping Centre
- Car Parking Arrangement Review - Pay on Foot
- Electrical Appliances Sub Group
- Swanwick Memorial Hall

**Performance Monitoring**

The panel continues to play an ongoing role in the monitoring of performance and has considered many progress reports in 2009/10 including:

- CBC Customer Services Centre
- Spirepride Improvement Plan
- Bereavement Services
- Best Value Review of Energy Efficiency, Action Plan

**Joint Working Initiatives**

As part of the performance monitoring role the panel has considered updates on performance for the councils Joint working initiatives including:

- Joint working Health & Safety
- Internal Audit
- Procurement
- Building Control

The Panel wish to thank Karen Brown, Principal Performance and Improvement Officer for her support to the Panel.
Scrutiny Developments during the Year

National Scrutiny Area Development Status 2010 for Chesterfield

Overview and Scrutiny at Chesterfield is continually trying to develop and improve its effectiveness. A major achievement this year was to be awarded support from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), the national organisation that promotes and supports the scrutiny role. The quality of the bid submitted to CfPS also brought the Council national Scrutiny Development Area Status 2010. The status attracted funding and expert support specifically to help with the Scrutiny Board’s Health Inequalities work which will also be used to develop a national scrutiny toolkit. Further details on the project are provided at Section 3 of this report.


Each of the above mentioned Acts have implications for the Overview and Scrutiny role. After long delays most of the duties impacting on Scrutiny from the 2006 and 2007 Acts are now in force. Both pieces of legislation introduced the new Scrutiny duty to consider ‘Councillor Call for Action’ (a duty which aims to strengthen the Ward Councillor’s community leadership role in bringing forward issues on behalf of their communities) and more general powers to challenge Partners (ie other organisations which deliver public services across the community, in particular those involved with the Local Strategic Partnership and Crime and Community Safety Partnership. The 2009 Act introduced further duties on Scrutiny in relation to considering Petitions presented by the public. In 2010 a further Local Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny) Bill commenced its passage through Parliament. We are very aware however at this moment in time of the potential for a change of Government in the forthcoming General Election and are therefore unsure how the policies of a new Government coming into power will impact on the local government Overview and Scrutiny function. Again an update will be provided in next year’s report.

Statutory Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee

Legislation now requires that Council’s appoint a Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee which must meet at least once a year to scrutinise crime and disorder matters.

The inception meeting of Chesterfield’s Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee was held 18 February 2010. Although crime and disorder
matters are scrutinised as a matter of course and Community Safety Partners attend Scrutiny Board meetings on an ongoing basis, this statutory committee will meet the specific requirements of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009. At this first meeting Members scrutinised the Community Safety Partnership’s Self Assessment and performance.

**Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire**

During the 2008/09 year a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) was established to scrutinise and monitor joint services delivered between the three Councils of Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire. An evaluation of the operation of the Joint Committee was reported in 2010 at the end of the pilot period and it was agreed by all three authorities that the Joint OSC should continue its work.

Section 3 of this report details the Joint OSC’s scrutiny of the shared procurement service using the ‘spotlight’ method which centres around an intensive, 1-day interviewing and evidence gathering process. The ‘spotlight’ process is completed over a shorter space of time, approximately 4 -6 weeks, which is much shorter than ‘in-depth’ scrutiny reviews which tend to take 6 months or more. The ‘spotlight’ method enables a short, sharp health-check for service delivery.

**Evaluation / Review of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Function**

The Scrutiny Board has been considering evaluation of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny function for some time pending various key officer appointments and reshaping of organisational structure. The Scrutiny Board agreed in February 2010 that a formal review should now be pursued. Key Members and officers have since held informal meetings to discuss the scope and detail of the review and provided a report to the Scrutiny Board and Cabinet to move ahead with an independent review. It is hoped this review will shape and further improve the scrutiny service for the future. Progress on the review will be included in next year’s Annual Scrutiny Report.

**Learning, Development and Promotion of Overview and Scrutiny at Chesterfield**

Throughout each year the Scrutiny Board tries to spend some time on development and promotion of its role and building relationships with its stakeholders. This is normally achieved in a variety of ways via learning and development courses, website development, press notices and communications with, and involvement of, all stakeholders in scrutiny work. Workloads this year have had an impact on development work which has subsequently been limited. We do however continue to consult internally and externally with key partners on issues for the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme. Learning and development for Scrutiny Councillors has also been limited this year.
Looking forward to 2010/11 Scrutiny Board Work Programme and Plans for next year

The Scrutiny Board Work Programme of planned items includes those issues agreed for Scrutiny Review Panels for the year, ongoing priorities such as budget and performance scrutiny, scrutiny of the Forward Plan and the monitoring of implementation and improvement plans. There will always be other unplanned business the Board will deal with as and when it arises.

Scrutiny aims for its work to have a strategic and community focus, and to involve stakeholders where possible. From consultation with the Public, Partners, Councillors and Officers undertaken, the Board has included the following areas and issues in its work programme for the 2010/11 municipal year:

- Health Inequalities
- Grit Bin Provision and Maintenance
- Litter Nuisance (Part II)
- Taxis and Town Centre Safety (Part II)
- Alcohol Licensing Enforcement
- Leisure Centres Budget Scrutiny
- Housing Tenancy Enforcement Policy
- Implementing Equalities Policy
- Eviction of Tenants regarding Water Rates

The Overview and Scrutiny function is a continually evolving and growing role requiring ongoing improvement and development. Much of the development this year is detailed in the previous section of this report. The development plans for 2010/11 we hope will emerge from the Council’s independent review of scrutiny now to take place.
Scrutiny at Chesterfield and Scrutiny Membership

### Scrutiny Board Councillors:
- Denise Hawksworth - Chair
- Toby Perkins - Vice Chair
- Jane Collins
- Alan Craw
- Bridget Dunks
- Keith Falconer
- Eleanor Holmes
- Vicki Lang
- Paul Mann
- Adrian Mather
- Roy Pastoll
- Nicky Qazi

### Efficiency and Best Value Scrutiny Panel Councillors:
- Nicky Qazi – Chair
- Bridget Dunks – Vice Chair
- Margaret Arnold
- Keith Falconer
- Chris Ludlow
- Toby Perkins
- Nicholas Redihough
- Paul Stone

**For further information contact:**

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or visit the Council's website at:
http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk
How Scrutiny Works in Chesterfield

STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL

COUNCIL
48 Members

- Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Appeal & Regulatory Committee
- Employment and General Committee

CABINET
Leader & Deputy (Lead Members)

8 Community Forums

Scrutiny Board & Efficiency and Best Value Scrutiny Panel

Standards Committee
CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
ARE WE ACCESSIBLE TO YOU?
IF NOT ASK US!

● We want everyone to be able to understand us
● We want everyone to be able to read our written material
● We aim to provide what you require to enable you to read, talk and write to us

On request we will provide FREE -
✓ language interpreters, including for sign language
✓ Translations of written materials into other languages
✓ Materials in braille, large print and on tape

Please contact us -
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Mobile text phone 07609 10264
Fax 01246 345252