Scrutiny
Annual Report 2012/13
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Another busy year for scrutiny is documented within this years scrutiny annual report, we are now at the end of our first full year under the new structure for scrutiny at Chesterfield Borough Council and this has produced pro-active scrutiny at Chesterfield allowing more members to become involved in issues and decisions at an early stage. This has lead to members being more informed on current issues and decisions by the executive and we have no doubt influenced the fact that during this period we received no call-in of decisions.

Link officers’ meetings have been a good opportunity for us to discuss our new structure and how things have been working and we are also in the process of our first review of the new scrutiny arrangements and will be considering the outcomes shortly. Scrutiny members have been attending scrutiny development sessions prior to each Scrutiny Forum meeting, the sessions have given us an opportunity to consider sections of our process and discuss them with a view to improvement.

We continue holding informal pre-agenda meetings for all scrutiny committee’s and the dates for these have been set and have been made available for officers and Executive members to attend and bring items forward to the committee’s. We continue to hold weekly scrutiny business meetings and from this we have produced Guidance and protocols for scrutiny within Chesterfield.

You will see within the report how we use the forward plan and the importance of this document to scrutiny, the plan has also evolved over the last year and this has been welcomed by scrutiny. We have yet again covered a wide variety of issues within scrutiny over the last year and the Council Budget has formed as an important part of our agenda, this is now a standing item on the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum agenda.

We received our first petition to scrutiny during this year with a special meeting to consider this taking place October 2012. We continue to work with other councils and attend regional network meetings and we have also worked with the Care Quality Commission over the past 12 months. We will continue to influence and challenge decisions and policy developments both with internal and external providers to ensure they have performance and good financial management at the forefront of any decision, whilst still providing an excellent service. We would like to thank all the officers and executive members for the way they have worked with us and also the members of scrutiny who have attended meetings and given useful and valid comments and recommendations.

Scrutiny Chairs

Councillor Vicki Lang

Councillor Jean Innes
Comments from the Chief Executive

It is my pleasure again to endorse the Annual Report of the Council’s Scrutiny Committees.

Based on what I have observed and read over the past 12 months, I am in no doubt that the time invested on the restructuring exercise has proven worthwhile. The new architecture that supports delivery of the Council’s scrutiny function looks very sound. And, whilst the function should never lose its ‘bite’, I sense a move to a more collaborative approach, where scrutiny members work with portfolio holders and officers with a common purpose to add value to the making of policy and the taking of decisions for the betterment of the people of Chesterfield.

It might seem obvious, perhaps expected, but what is encouraging is that the issues that have come before our scrutiny members are exactly those that really matter to local people – waste collection, dog control, anti-social behaviour, welfare reform and sports facilities. The Council’s scrutiny function is therefore not just ‘making a difference’ but, being seen to do so.

The adoption of a ‘cradle to grave’ approach is likewise to be applauded, i.e. picking up key issues for scrutiny at pre-decision stage through the forward plan, making recommendations to Cabinet to inform the final decision taken, and then tracking implementation of the decision to judge whether the right outputs and outcomes have ultimately been achieved.

It is also apparent that through the new Scrutiny Committee’s non-portfolio members are able to be far more involved and engaged with Council business than had previously been the case. The benefit of this is that when the budget and medium-term financial plan, matters of corporate and service performance, new and revised policies come before full Council for approval, all members are better informed to support their engagement in debate and their comfort with the final decision(s) taken.

The Scrutiny Committee Work Plans for 2013/14 look equally impressive. And, I would certainly encourage the Scrutiny Chairs to link up with their opposite numbers in other Derbyshire Councils to jointly scrutinise the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Police and Crime Commissioner. These are important agendas for the people of Chesterfield.

There is clearly a lot more work to be done in consolidating the first year of operation of our new scrutiny arrangements. The introduction of new guidance and protocols will certainly help as will further investment in member development.

My thanks and congratulations to Councillors Innes and Lang and to all the Scrutiny Committee members for their diligence, enthusiasm and commitment to promoting and progressing this very important Council function.

And, likewise, to Anita Cunningham and Sara Goodwin for their advice and support to Scrutiny Committee members.

With kind regards
Huw Bowen
The Scrutiny Committee Work and Achievements 2012/13

Detailed below is the work undertaken by the Council’s Scrutiny Committees during the municipal year 2012/13.

The council scrutiny structure currently comprises 3 Scrutiny Committees which are the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum, the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee.

The Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees may undertake scrutiny work as a committee, or appoint scrutiny project groups (informal working groups) to undertake specific task and finish projects before reporting back to the parent Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The work undertaken during 2012/13 is detailed below.

Forward Plan and Pre-Decision Scrutiny

A standing item on each Scrutiny Committee 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 Committee with the opportunity to undertake ‘pre-decision scrutiny’, scrutiny of a matter before a formal decision is made by Cabinet and to then make recommendations to influence the decision. The Forward Plan must also contain reference to key decisions to be made which are exempt from public access and are to be made in private.

The following Executive Members (and their Assistant Executive Members as necessary) have attended scrutiny committees during the year to present pre-cabinet reports, policies, plans and strategies:

- Leader of the Council/Executive Member for Regeneration, Councillor Burrows
- Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Planning, Councillor Gilby
- Executive Member for Governance and Organisational Development, Councillor King
- Executive Member for Customers and Communities, Councillor Blank
- Executive Member for Environment, Councillor Ludlow
- Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism, Councillor Stringer
- Executive Member for Housing, Councillor McManus

Throughout 2012/13 Scrutiny Committees undertook pre-decision scrutiny, influencing decisions on the following policies, plans and strategies:

- Customer Services Strategy
- Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy
- Chesterfield Health Inequalities Plan
- Grit Bins Policy
- Draft Corporate Plan
- Housing Anti Social Behaviour Policy Statement
- Housing Allocations Policy
Budget and Performance Scrutiny

The Scrutiny Committees undertake budget and performance scrutiny receiving and scrutinising budget management reports bi-monthly and corporate performance reports on a six monthly basis. Throughout the year, the Council Leader, Executive Members and Chief Officers are challenged on the budgets and performance of their service areas and on how they contribute to priorities for the Chesterfield community.

In particular during this period Scrutiny Committees have:

- Questioned the Council Leader about Budget proposals.
- Monitored and challenged overall corporate performance against agreed targets.
- Monitored and challenged performance progress in relation to the Corporate Services Public/Private Partnership contract for the Council’s Corporate Services functions.
- Monitored and challenged performance progress against agreed actions in implementing the Council’s adopted Street Scene Improvement Plan.
- Monitored action plan performance progress in implementing the Equalities, Diversity and Social Inclusion Strategy.

The Committees also received reports on:

- Delivering the Market Hall Refurbishment.
- Review of the council’s Homelessness Prevention Service.
- Allotments Strategy.
- Community Right to Challenge
- East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust Review Consultation.
- Health and Wellbeing in Chesterfield.

Scrutiny Committee Power of ‘Call-in’

Scrutiny legislation allows for an Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to investigate, make reports and recommendations on Cabinet decisions that have been agreed but not yet put into action. Legislation allows for action on these decisions to be suspended pending such a Scrutiny inquiry. This process is referred to as scrutiny ‘Call-in’.

Following a scrutiny call-in inquiry, the Scrutiny Committee may request Cabinet reconsider its decision on the basis of the further evidence gathered. No call-in’s were received during the 2012/13 year.

Petition Regarding Dog Control

The Council received a petition of over 800 signatures regarding the issue of dog control. The Petition requested the council consider the potential dangers of dogs not under good control in public areas and parks suggesting
that owners be required to keep dogs on the lead. The Petition explained:

We the undersigned believe that in order to maintain safety of our public parks, and footpaths that there should be a designation in certain public parks and footpaths to keep dogs on leads.

We feel that this would be in the interests of dog owners themselves in order to avoid incidents with members of the public, where members of the public are threatened by dogs or where there can be incidents with other dogs and dog owners.

We believe that prevention is better than cure, and that any system such as this would be welcomed by dog owners and non-dog owners alike.

We further believe that whilst the vast majority of dog owners are responsible, that the introduction of such a scheme would help ensure a cleaner and healthier environment.

**We think the Council should:**

- Introduce a system where some parks are designated as parks where dogs must be on leads. Other parks can be advertised as ones where dogs are allowed to run freely.

- Consult members of the public in local areas as to the designation of local parks on the basis of the above.

- On introduction of such a designation, launch a publicity campaign to highlight the differences between the two.

The Petition was referred to and considered by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum at a special meeting in October 2012. The Forum resolved:

1. That a Scrutiny review group be set up to give further consideration to the petition, and wider issues around dog control and the Council’s responsibilities.

2. That when ready the proposed review panel scope be agreed by the Forum, following consultation with the Executive Member and Environmental Protection and Streetscene Manager, and provided to the chief petitioner and local ward member for information.

3. That the Forum welcomes the petition and thanks the petitioner for bringing these issues to Members’ attention.

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**Scrutiny Project Group on introduction of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme**

Councillor Denise Hawksworth – Project Group Lead Member

A Scrutiny Review Panel was appointed to look at helping develop a Local Council Tax Support Scheme, the introduction of which was a new legal requirement. In designing and adopting the required Local Council Tax Support Scheme the Council was also obliged to make-up a 10% government funding shortfall. The Panel focussed its inquiry on options for the adoption of a scheme which does not pass on the funding shortfall to benefits claimants. The Panel’s report and findings were received by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 10 December 2012 which agreed the following recommendations be made to Cabinet:
1. Subject to the proposed savings in the report being found to meet c£186k funding shortfall, a new Local Council Tax Support (Benefit) Scheme is introduced by 31 January for 2013/14, which does not pass on the shortfall cost to claimants, and thereby saving £100k estimated non-payment, write off cost, and ensuring the Council can meet the new funding criteria to qualify for £23k government transition grant.

2. That the changes to empty and second homes discounts, as detailed in the report, amounting to a minimum saving of c£73.5k, be applied and used to cover the council tax support shortfall.

3. That for the year 2013/14 each allocated Community Forum Budget is limited to £5k, and that for 2012/13 all unused Forum budget above £5k be recouped with immediate effect, and the savings used to cover the Council Tax Support shortfall.

Cabinet received and considered the report and recommendations on 18 December 2012 where it resolved that further consideration be given to the recommendations of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum as part of the Cabinet’s deliberations on establishing a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Chesterfield. Cabinet also recognised the value of the work done by the Scrutiny Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Forum and acknowledged the Scrutiny Panel’s recommendations had some merit and could be used to inform and develop Council policies for dealing with shortfalls in government funding for Council Tax Benefit. It was also noted however that some of the savings identified in the Scrutiny Panel’s report were to be used for other purposes within the Council’s budget and were therefore not available to support Council Tax Benefit claimants.

Scrutiny Project Group on Anti Social Behaviour Policy

Councillor Barry Dyke – Project Group Lead Member

A Scrutiny Review Panel was appointed to scrutinise and help develop the Council’s Anti Social Behaviour Policy. The Panel concluded its report which was considered by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 17 January 2013 where it was agreed the following recommendations be made to Cabinet:

1. That the Council’s corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Strategy be reviewed in light of the findings of the Scrutiny Review Panel’s report into Anti-Social Behaviour and this Forum’s recommendations.

2. That Anti Social Behaviour be managed in the Housing Department where Council tenants were involved, and Anti Social Behaviour in the private sector and the wider community be managed by the Community Safety Team and appropriately resourced.

3. That the ‘meeting culture’ and entangled bureaucracy of the Derbyshire Community Safety Partnership be addressed, empowering officers to use professional judgement in order to provide for an ‘outward facing’ and ‘service orientated’ community focussed resource.

4. That swift intervention to combat victimisation be given ‘the’ priority.

5. That a ‘feet on the street’ ethos be central to new planning.

6. That Anti Social Behaviour be recognised as core business and resourced as a ‘cause of harm’ rather than being marginalised as ‘not crime’.

7. That consideration be given to improving communication between and within organisations, to address any ‘silo mentality’.
8. That the Community Safety Team be responsible for driving these improvements with communication between and within all other organisations which form the Community Safety Partnership.

9. That multi-agency case working staff located in the Community Safety Team be employed to target global ‘entrenched issues’ as well as day to day management of Anti Social Behaviour cases, irrespective of tenure, in direct partnership with other agencies such as the police.

10. That the Private Sector fund of £20,000 recurring per annum, provided via the General Fund be equally accessible by both Housing and Community Safety functions in helping address Anti Social Behaviour.

11. That the Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Statement be supported.

The recommendations are currently pending Cabinet consideration.

Scrutiny Project Group on Refuse Collection

Councillor Howard Borrell - Project Group Lead Member

A Scrutiny project group was appointed to look into issues associated with the introduction of the new blue recycling bin following some public concern and negative correspondence in the local media. The review aim is to identify any failings and recommend a way forward. The review is near completion and will be submitted for consideration to the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 21 March 2013.

Scrutiny Project Group on Leisure Options

Councillor Stewart Bradford – Project Group Lead Member

A Scrutiny Review Panel was appointed to monitor and scrutinise implementation of Cabinet proposals to progress the council’s ambition to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its Leisure Centres. The Panel’s work is ongoing.

The Empowering Communities Inclusion and Neighbourhood Management System (E-CINS) went live last spring. The system keeps all the organisations in the Community Safety Partnership updated on cases and in contact with each other.

The recommendations are currently pending Cabinet consideration.
Statutory Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee

Legislation requires that all Councils appoint a Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee (CDSC) which must meet at least once a year to provide overview and scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership’s work and performance. Meetings of the Committee were held on 4 October 2012 and 28 March 2013 to receive and scrutinise performance progress against the Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership Plan actions for 2012/13, specifically to reduce Anti Social Behaviour, Violent Crime (including Domestic Violence) and Acquisitive Crime.

The committee made recommendations relating to:

1. The evaluation report on the Redeeming Our Communities pilot project requesting the evaluation report be submitted to Scrutiny.
2. Support for Derbyshire Constabulary’s request for a Bye-law relating to the offence of urinating or defecating in a public place.
3. Support to introduce the ECINS system (an I.T. system developed to manage cases involving persons susceptible to harm and anti-social behaviour across the Derbyshire area).

The Crime and Disorder Committee also received a report in October 2012 regarding new proposals in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the creation of a new scrutiny Police and Crime Panel (PCP) (see section 5 of this report). How existing Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committees will work with and inform the work of the PCP is under consideration and development.

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Panel for Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire and Bolsover

During the 2012/13 municipal year the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Panel (JOSP) met in July and October 2012.

The Panel scrutinised performance and monitored joint services delivered between the three Councils of Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire receiving reports from the Head of Internal Audit Consortium, Head of Shared Procurement Unit and Business Manager for the BCN (Building Control) Consultancy, regarding the effective and efficient operation of their services.

The Panel also looked at the Corporate Plans and priorities for each of the three councils to identify common areas that would benefit from scrutiny attention. Following this a health-check inquiry into the purchase and costs of all insurances for each of the three councils was requested and the results due to be reported in April 2013.

Local Authority Health Scrutiny

In July 2012 the Department of Health consulted Local Authorities on consultation proposals for Local Authority Health Scrutiny. The proposals were to formulate new regulations and guidance on local authority health scrutiny following the introduction of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (see section 5 of this report). The Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum considered the consultation document and put forward its comments for a corporate response to the consultation.
4 Scrutiny Outcomes and Impact on Service Delivery

The Scrutiny Committees monitor the progress of implementation of 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, that the work of Scrutiny impacts on service delivery and the benefits of scrutiny work are received by people in our community. During 2012/13 the Scrutiny Committees continued to monitor progress on scrutiny recommendations regarding the following:

- Grit Bins Scrutiny Review
- Water Rates Payments Policy
- Health Inequalities Scrutiny Review
- Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee
- Call-In Regarding the Proposed Designation of Ashgate Road to Saltergate Conservation Area

Background detail of these reports and recommendations can be found in previous Annual Scrutiny Report reports. More specific progress made this year is detailed below.

Achievements:

Cabinet and officers subsequently undertook further work to develop a policy for the acquisition and maintenance of grit bins. The Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee was consulted and put forward views on the policy options provided.

Call-In Regarding the Proposed Designation of Ashgate Road to Saltergate Conservation Area

In July 2011 the Council’s Cabinet considered a report regarding the designation of and extension of Chesterfield Town Centre Conservation Area to include the Saltergate and Ashgate Road corridor. The proposals were agreed subject to community consultation. A call-in request was made and the Cabinet decision was called for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee. The call-in members listed seven reasons for reconsideration.
**The Scrutiny Committee concluded:**

1. That the consultation period had been rushed and residents had not been given sufficient information to enable them to understand the consequences of their decision.

2. That additional relevant information be given to Cabinet.

3. That the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Planning had signed off the report before the consultation period had finished.

4. Ward Councillors had not been involved fully in the consultation process.

5. The decision was not included in the Forward Plan and the procedures relating to special urgency had not been followed; briefing sessions should be arranged about the Forward Plan.

**Achievements:**

Following referral by the Scrutiny Board, Cabinet agreed on 6 September 2011 to reconsider its decision to enable a further view to be taken on the merits of the proposal. This lead to:

1. An extension of the original public consultation period and more information about the proposals being made available to the public and councillors.

2. The profile and importance of the council’s Forward Plan of key decisions being raised significantly throughout the Council. The importance of statutory obligations to scrutiny committee’s and their Chairs in cases where urgent key decisions not in the Forward Plan are to be made, were also highlighted to officers and members.

**Inquiry into the Eviction of Tenants regarding Water Rates Payments**

In February 2011 the Scrutiny Board commenced an inquiry into the eviction of tenants regarding water rates payments. The Scrutiny Board had concerns that council tenants could be evicted solely for the non-payment of water rates rather than for rent arrears.

The Scrutiny Board recommended existing policies be amended and a new policy introduced to help minimise the risk of eviction of tenants for the non-payment of water rates only. The Board’s recommendations and policy proposals were considered and agreed by Cabinet on 31 January 2012.

An evaluation of the operation of the new policy is due to be received by the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in April 2013.
Evaluation and Review of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Function

In last year’s Annual Scrutiny Report we introduced the council’s new scrutiny arrangements and committee structure following an independent review of the function. The committee structure is provided in the next sections of this report and detail of committee remits and responsibilities can be found in last year’s annual scrutiny report or the council constitution available via the council’s website.

On adoption of the new arrangements it was requested that a corporate review of their operation be undertaken after 12 months. This corporate review has now been completed and, at the time of writing this report, its findings are yet to be reported to the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum for pre-decision scrutiny, before being reported to Cabinet and Council for a decision. The conclusions and recommendations from the review are currently being determined.

Scrutiny Guidance and Protocols

In line with the new overview and scrutiny arrangements in last year’s report we agreed the need for the introduction of some key guidance documents such as:

- An Internal Working Protocol essentially for the Council’s Members and Officers clarifying the day to day scrutiny and executive working relationship.

This document is near complete and ready for adoption.

- An Internal Working Protocol for Scrutiny Councillors to help them deliver their overview and scrutiny duties and obligations.

This guidance will comprise a number of different areas including those for Call-in, Councillor Call for Action, Petitions, Scrutiny Project Groups Operation and Support, Scrutiny Committee Reporting and others.

A guidance document supporting the operation and processes around Scrutiny Project Groups is near complete and ready for adoption.

- A Public Guidance document which promotes scrutiny externally, explains its role to the public and how the public can be involved.

Commencement planned for this year.

- A Partner Protocol which explains how the Council’s overview and scrutiny function will engage and involve key partners and external organisations.

Commencement planned for this year.

Scrutiny Link Officers

Also coming out of the independent review of scrutiny was the suggestion to introduce Scrutiny Link Officers. A role profile for Scrutiny Link Officers has been developed and introduced (this was detailed in last year’s report and is available on request).

Two Scrutiny Link Officers have been appointed from each of the main council departments to act as contacts between scrutiny members and council services. An informal Scrutiny Link Officer Group has formed which meets monthly for information
sharing and consultation with the scrutiny committee Chairs, the Scrutiny Officer and Executive member for Governance (scrutiny).

**Scrutiny Councillor Development**

The Council agrees that the development and growth of individuals to enable them to undertaken their roles effectively, is essential.

During the year Scrutiny members have been attending in-house scrutiny development sessions every 2 months prior to each meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum. The sessions have given members an opportunity to consider scrutiny process and discuss them with a view to improvement.

Scrutiny Members also received in-house training on Budget Scrutiny in September 2012.

Learning and development plans are ongoing.

**Care Quality Commission (CQC), Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) and District Councils exploring the local relationship with health care quality**

Following on from our achievement in gaining national Scrutiny Development Area status for Health Inequalities as reported in previous annual reports, this year we worked informally with the Care Quality Commission and CfPS to explore the local relationship with health care quality.

We attended 3 Action Learning workshops with representatives of the CQC, CfPS and other District Councils where we explored the following key areas:

- Local councillors and officers feeding care quality issues through to the Health and Wellbeing Board, Clinical Commissioning Groups and statutory Health Scrutiny Committees.

  - The relationship of Environmental Health and Planning and Development Services with the CQC’s health service registration process.

  - Influences on older people’s health in their own homes and care homes, and particularly the impacts of mental health on communities.

  - Better sharing of information by CQC with Districts and of local level intelligence with CQC.

The learning and development work is currently ongoing. The CQC and CfPS can see the benefits in continuing the work for a further year and are currently looking to secure health funding to continue with the project.

**Derbyshire Scrutiny Liaison Group**

The Derbyshire Scrutiny Liaison Group is an informal network comprising lead Scrutiny Councillors and Officers from each of the councils in Derbyshire. The group meets twice yearly and its terms of reference are to:

- Promote effective collaboration between the member authorities;

- Make Liaison Group members aware of planned and current scrutiny activity being undertaken in each organisation, avoiding duplication of work and resources and sharing best practice and learning points from work undertaken;

- Raise and discuss potential areas of joint scrutiny activities, and;

- Pro-active consideration of legislative developments that may affect the scrutiny function.
The Group is currently looking to develop a framework for better joint scrutiny working particularly around health and wellbeing.

East Midlands Councils’ Regional Scrutiny Network and the National Overview and Scrutiny Forum

The East Midlands Councils Regional Scrutiny Network and the National Overview and Scrutiny Forum are both forums for learning, sharing, promoting, supporting and developing the scrutiny function regionally and nationally.

The Regional Scrutiny Network is supported by East Midlands Councils which is a local government consultative body and provides important learning and development for local government councillors and officers in the East Midlands. The Regional Scrutiny Network gives councillors and officers the opportunity to share knowledge, work programmes and information, as well as providing opportunity to explore and influence national developments concerning scrutiny.

The National Overview and Scrutiny Forum was set up in 2007 to help develop the overview and scrutiny function in England and Wales. The Forum comprises Chairs and Vice Chairs (or equivalent) of each Regional Scrutiny Network. The Forum is convened and facilitated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny but controls its own agenda and work programme which are driven by the needs and interests of overview and scrutiny practitioners.

The Council plays a proactive role in supporting and contributing to the work of these bodies and the influence they have regionally and nationally. Currently the Council’s Scrutiny Officer holds the position of Vice Chair for the East Midlands Councils Regional Scrutiny Network and is therefore also an appointed regional representative for the National Overview and Scrutiny Forum. This currently raises Chesterfield’s profile and puts Chesterfield in a good place to learn and influence developments around scrutiny, and to help champion, lead and promote scrutiny externally.

The Council also hosted a meeting of the regional network in September 2012.

Overview and Scrutiny Legislation

Localism Act 2011

Last year we reported on the arrival of the Localism Act 2011 and the choice for local Councils to retain the Executive and Scrutiny political decision making system which Chesterfield Borough Council decided to do.

The Localism Act extends the breadth of District / Borough Council scrutiny powers to include various other external partners and key organisations.

The CfPS is currently evaluating how the Act’s new power of General Competence replaces (if it does) the former scrutiny powers to ‘ensure the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of its area’. The current view is that the wellbeing powers have not been removed or replaced.

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

A Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire was elected in November 2012 and government regulations and guidance have now been produced. The elected Police and Crime Commissioner is scrutinised and held to account by the appointed Police and Crime Panel (PCP) which comprises of at least one councillor from each council in the Derbyshire police force area.

The Council’s statutory Crime and Disorder Committee received a report in October 2012 regarding the new proposals and the committee’s relationship with the new scrutiny PCP. How existing council statutory Crime
and Disorder Scrutiny Committees will work with and inform the work of the PCP, is under consideration and development.

**Health and Social Care Act 2012**

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 makes Public Health services the responsibility of Local Government, in our case Derbyshire County Council. The Act introduces a required Health and Wellbeing Board as a committee of the (Derbyshire County) Council to undertake a joint strategic health needs assessment and develop a joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the area, and encourage integrated working. The Health and Wellbeing Board has a statutory obligation to involve and work with its District / Borough Councils.

Councils (with former Social Care responsibilities) can retain their Health Scrutiny function. No Health Scrutiny duties have been placed with District / Borough Councils, although there is a strong expectation for involvement and partnership working given the direct, positive influences on health, wellbeing and social care that District / Borough Council services already provide.

We are working with Derbyshire County Council, the East Midlands Region Scrutiny Network and with CfPS to develop more pro-active and engaged health and wellbeing scrutiny work. Since last year’s report we have been looking to develop a partnership framework to enable the County and District Councils Scrutiny Committees to work together better on health and wellbeing scrutiny.

You can find general details of Overview and Scrutiny Committee obligations and powers in our Annual Scrutiny Reports for previous years, and by visiting the CfPS website www.cfps.org.uk

Further progress and impact on the development and/or changes to the Scrutiny function will be included in next year’s report.
6 Looking forward to 2013/14

The three Scrutiny Committees update their Work Programme items on a bi-monthly basis, in line with their bi-monthly meetings. As for previous years, a stakeholder consultation took place at the beginning of the year to engage and enable them to inform and influence the work programmes for 2013/14. Scrutiny aims for its work to have both a strategic and community focus, and to involve all stakeholders where possible. Consultation with Councillors, Officers, Public and Partners is normally undertaken to inform contents of the Scrutiny Work Programmes.

Programmes of work would normally include:

- Items agreed by the Scrutiny Committees for consideration including Scrutiny Project Group work.

- Ongoing priorities such as budget, performance and corporate priority (Corporate Plan) scrutiny.

- Scrutiny of the Council’s Forward Plan of key decisions.

- The monitoring of implementation of approved scrutiny recommendations.

- The monitoring of implementation of corporate and service improvement plans.

- Other unplanned business items that the Committees will decide to deal with as and when they arise.

Current listed Work Programme business includes:

Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum

- Budget, Corporate Plan and Performance monitoring

- Corporate Services PPP Performance

- Tenant Led Self Regulation

- Asset Management Plan

- External Communications Strategy

- Overview and Scrutiny Review Evaluation

Scrutiny Project Groups on:

- Refuse Collection (Blue Bin)

- Anti Social Behaviour Policy

- Financial Savings and Corporate Fees Policy

- Council Tax and Housing Benefits

- Petition on Dog Control

- Capital Strategy

Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee


- Customer Services Strategy.

- Statutory Crime and Disorder Committee duties.

- Voluntary and Community Grants.

- Corporate Health and Safety Improvement Plan Monitoring.
The Overview and Scrutiny function is a continually evolving and growing role, requiring ongoing learning and development. Much of the developments this year are detailed in the previous section of this report. It is intended that the Council will undertake formal, annual reviews of its overview and scrutiny function to ensure its ongoing evaluation.

Scrutiny Project Group on:
- Financial Inclusion

Enterprise and Wellbeing
Scrutiny Committee

- Markets Hall Refurbishment
- Housing Repairs Policy
- Allotments Strategy
- Rationalisation of Play Areas
- Street Scene Improvement Plan Monitoring
- Sport and Active Recreation Strategy
- Housing / Credit Union Service
- Juveniles and Environmental Crime
- Housing Allocations Policy

Scrutiny Project Groups on:
- Sport and Leisure - Future Options
- Parking Policy Review
# Scrutiny Committee Membership 2012/13

## Overview and Performance Scrutiny Board Councillors:

- Vicki Lang - Co Chair
- Jean Innes - Co Chair
- Howard Borrell
- Stewart Bradford
- Keith Brown
- Ian Callan
- Alexis Diouf
- Barry Dyke
- Michael Fanshawe
- Bob Gibson
- Denise Hawksworth
- Julie Lowe

## Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee Councillors

- Jean Innes - Chair
- Tom Murphy - Vice Chair
- Howard Borrell
- Alexis Diouf
- Michael Fanshawe
- Julie Lowe
- Neil Rayner
- Andy Slack
Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Councillors

Vicki Lang - Chair
Denise Hawksworth - Vice Chair
Stewart Bradford
Keith Brown
Ian Callan
Barry Dyke
Bob Gibson
Gordon Simmons

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Anita Cunningham
Scrutiny Officer
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 -
General enquiries  01246 345345
Mobile text phone  07609 10264
Fax 01246 345252

Czy łatwo jest skontaktować się z nami? Jeżeli nie, powiedz nam o tym!

Siamo accessibili nei vostri riguardi? In caso contrario rivolgetevi a noi!