

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 7th April 2016

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WARDS: All

PART I **FOR COMMENT AND ENDORSEMENT**

ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2015/16

1. **Purpose of Report**

The Annual Scrutiny Report is presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) for comment and endorsement at its final meeting of the Municipal Year. The purpose of this cover report is to provide the Committee with background on the constitutional requirement of an Annual Scrutiny Report to Council, and to provide members with an opportunity to comment on the draft report and seeks views on any other information that should be included in the Report.

2. **Recommendation to Council**

The Committee is requested to:

1. Suggest any amendments to the draft Report they feel necessary; and
2. Subject to any amendments, endorse that the Report be presented to Council on 19th April 2016.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

- 3.1 The Council's decision-making and the effective scrutiny of it underpins the delivery of all the Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy priorities. The OSC, along with the four Scrutiny Panels combine to meet the local authority's statutory requirement to provide public transparency and accountability, ensuring the best outcomes for the residents of Slough.
- 3.2 The work of the OSC also reflects the priorities of the Five Year Plan, as follows:
 - Slough will be the premier location in the south east for businesses of all sizes to locate, start, grow, and stay
 - There will more homes in the borough, with quality improving across all tenures to support our ambition for Slough
 - The centre of Slough will be vibrant, providing business, living, and cultural opportunities

- Slough will be one of the safest places in the Thames Valley
- More people will take responsibility and manage their own health, care and support needs
- Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life chances
- The Council's income and the value of its assets will be maximised
- The Council will be a leading digital transformation organisation

3.3 Overview and Scrutiny is a process by which decision-makers are accountable to local people, via their elected representatives for improving outcomes relating to all priorities for the Borough and its residents. Scrutiny seeks to influence those who make decisions by considering the major issues affecting the Borough and making recommendations about how services can be improved. The Annual Scrutiny Report supports the Scrutiny Function by providing a record of the work carried out during the year and plans for the future year.

4. **Supporting Information**

4.1 Annual reports are an opportunity to review the scrutiny work programme for the past year and assess the impact of scrutiny has had on influencing policy and holding the Executive to account. Looking at an Annual Report can help us to understand the nature of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny and to assess its effectiveness. It also gives an opportunity to reflect on any lessons learned during the year to help guide future work.

4.2 The production of an Annual Report is a statutory requirement of the Constitution and in addition the Committee "must report annually to the full Council on future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate."

4.3 This Committee is provided with a draft of the Annual Scrutiny Report which highlights some key achievements from the year where Scrutiny has made a difference.

4.4 There is scope to build on and develop different methods of scrutiny next year; particular attention needs to be given on evidencing how Scrutiny actually makes a difference and forward planning.

5. **Conclusion**

The Local Authority, through its Overview and Scrutiny Function, has an influential, as well as statutory, role in scrutinising the activities and performance of the Cabinet and External Bodies. The Annual Scrutiny Report provides an opportunity to communicate the work the Committee and its Panels have undertaken, challenges faced and the improvements made as a result of scrutiny.

6. **Appendices Attached**

A - Draft Annual Scrutiny Report 2015/16

7. **Background Papers**

None.