

6 July 2016

BROOKE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14 JULY 2016

A meeting of the Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held at 5.30pm on Thursday 14 July in Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Rugby.

Councillor Claire Edwards
Chair of Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

A G E N D A

PART 1 – PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2016.

2. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence from the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of:

(a) non-pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;

(b) pecuniary interests as defined by the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors;

(c) notice under Section 106 Local Government Finance Act 1992 – non-payment of Community Charge or Council Tax.

Note: Members are reminded that they should declare the existence and nature of their non-pecuniary interests at the commencement of the meeting (or as soon as the interest becomes apparent). If that interest is a pecuniary interest, the Member must withdraw from the room unless one of the exceptions applies.

Membership of Warwickshire County Council or any Parish Council is classed as a non-pecuniary interest under the Code of Conduct. A Member does not need to declare this interest unless the Member chooses to speak on a matter relating to their membership. If the Member does not wish to speak on the matter, the Member may still vote on the matter without making a declaration.

4. Communities and Homes Portfolio Holder
5. Finance and Performance Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 4
6. Benn Hall – Two Year Marketing and Business Plan
7. Review of Welfare Reform
8. Review of Homelessness
9. Committee Work Programme

Any additional papers for this meeting can be accessed via the website.

Membership of the Committee:

Councillors Ms Edwards (Chair), A'Barrow, Cade, Mrs Garcia, Miss Lawrence, Mrs New, Mrs O'Rourke, Sandison and Dr Williams

If you have any general queries with regard to this agenda please contact Veronika Beckova, Democratic Services Officer (01788 533523 or e-mail veronika.beckova@rugby.gov.uk). Any specific queries concerning reports should be directed to the listed contact officer.

If you wish to attend the meeting and have any special requirements for access please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

<i>Name of Meeting</i>	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<i>Date of Meeting</i>	14 July 2016
<i>Report Title</i>	Communities and Homes Portfolio Holder
<i>Ward Relevance</i>	None
<i>Contact Officer</i>	Paul Ansell 01788 533591
<i>Summary</i>	The Communities and Homes Portfolio Holder will meet the committee to discuss performance and future strategy in relation to the portfolio
<i>Financial Implications</i>	There are no financial implications relating to this report.
<i>Risk Management Implications</i>	There are no risk management implications arising from this report.
<i>Environmental Implications</i>	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
<i>Legal Implications</i>	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
<i>Equality and Diversity</i>	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

Public Report to Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 July 2016

Communities and Homes Portfolio Holder

Summary

The Communities and Homes Portfolio Holder will meet the committee to discuss performance and future strategy in relation to the portfolio.

1. BACKGROUND

The portfolio holders are invited in turn to OSC meetings. In the past, this has been done either:

- to discuss a current issue that is on a committee's agenda; or
- to look at performance in achieving the actions and performance indicators in the Corporate Change and Improvement Plan (CCIP)

In practice, when the second of these is the reason for attendance, the discussion has tended to develop into a general discussion of activity within the portfolio.

The intention at the present meeting is to combine both of these, to allow a wide-ranging two-way discussion, and continue the constructive working relationship between scrutiny and the portfolio holder.

2. PERFORMANCE

Attached at Appendix 1 is an RPMS screen print quantifying current actions in the Communities and Homes portfolio and a list of actions that are overdue. Any overdue performance indicators are reported in the Finance and Performance at item 5 on the agenda.

Members are encouraged to interrogate the RPMS to explore the actions and indicators within the portfolio in greater detail.

3. PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S REPORT

Councillor Leigh Hunt produced a report on the former Sustainable Inclusive Communities portfolio at the end of last municipal year (Appendix 2). This could be used as the basis of some of the discussion but, as the portfolio has stressed, there have been some developments since the report was produced.

The Leader has yet to define the new portfolios in detail but it is known that the Communities and Homes portfolio includes the following:

- **Housing**
- **Benefits**
- **Customer Services and Business Support** – formerly in Resources and Corporate Governance
- **ICT** – formerly in Resources and Corporate Governance
- **Equality and Diversity**

The following questions have been submitted as the basis for discussion:

1. In what ways (if at all) are the housing responsibilities of the Communities and Homes portfolio different from the housing responsibilities of the former Sustainable Inclusive Communities portfolio?
2. What aspects of housing do you expect to be emphasised in the new corporate strategy?
3. What effect will the right to buy for housing association tenants have on the council in terms of possible disposal of council stock to subsidise the right to buy?
4. Are we able to estimate how many of our tenants exceed the £31,000 household income threshold that will bring them into “pay to stay”? How will we find out which of our tenants are liable?
5. In anticipation of the regulations on fixed term tenancies, what are your thoughts as to the length of tenancy that the council is likely to offer?
6. Are you able to update the committee further to your answer to the question to Council on 19 April about the operation of the Multi Storey Charter?
7. Where does the health part of the former Health, Community Safety and Equality portfolio now rest?
8. Do you have any early thoughts about areas where improvements might be made in the parts of your portfolio that were not in Sustainable Inclusive Communities?
 - Customer Services and Business Support
 - ICT
 - Equality and Diversity

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 14 July 2016

Subject Matter: Communities and Homes Portfolio Holder

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

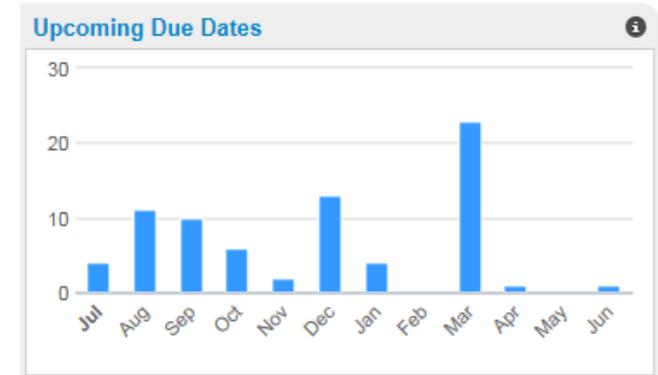
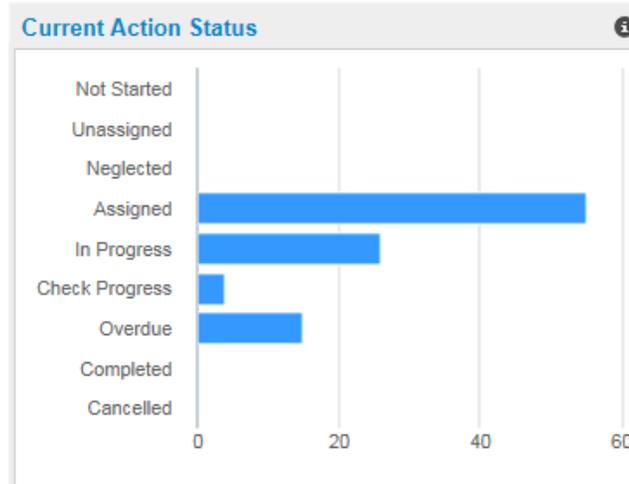
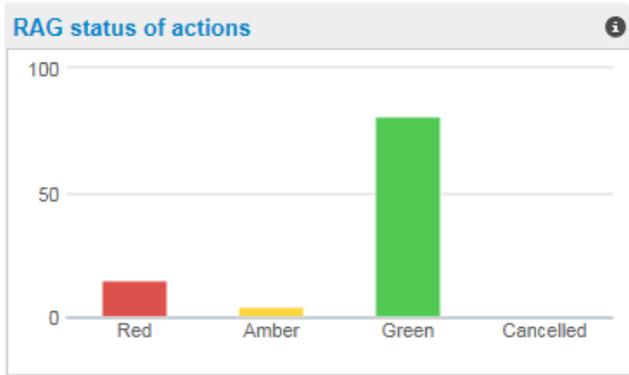
There are no background papers relating to this item.

Communities and Homes Portfolio – actions currently in the Corporate Change and Improvement Plans as at 1 July 2016
See overleaf for details of overdue actions

148
 Total actions in the CCIP

32
 CCIP actions overdue

73
 CCIP actions due for completion in the next 12 months



Communities and Homes Portfolio – overdue actions in the Corporate Change and Improvement Plan

Code	Title	Progress	Parent Action	Start Date	Due Date
CH602	IT Strategy review	0%	<i>Council misc</i> Carry out innovative and high-quality business activities that aim to meet best practice and legal obligations		31 May 16
CH613 EqIA	Consider need for Equality Impact Assessment and produce one if necessary	0%	CH613 Streamlining customer reports using the Internet and the CRM		30 Jun 16
CH613.1	Review online forms, including frequency and purpose	0%	CH613 Streamlining customer reports using the Internet and the CRM.		30 Jun 16
CH617.2.2	Carry out review and revision of Mobility Scooter Policy	30%	CH617.2 Housing Operations Policies	18 Mar 16	30 Apr 16
CH618 EqIA	Undertake an Equality Impact Assessment and produce one if necessary	50%	CH618 Review SLAs with charities and community associations	13 Jun 16	30 Jun 16
CH618.1	Prepare and agree specification	0%	CH618 Review SLAs with charities and community associations		30 Jun 16
CH619.3	Develop tender specification and evaluation criteria	75%	CH619 Refurbishment of Patterdale	17 Mar 16	31 May 16
CH624.01.2	Carry out a review of existing local services e.g. housing, support, employment and advice	0%	CH624.01 Understanding housing need		31 Dec 15
CH624.01.5	Review the accessibility of the Housing Options service for vulnerable people in Rugby	50%	CH624.01 Understanding housing need	22 Jun 16	31 Dec 15
CH624.02	Tenancy Sustainment	0%	CH624 Homelessness Strategy		30 Apr 16
CH624.02.1	Introduce a Tenancy Ready Pilot Scheme	0%	CH624.02 Tenancy Sustainment		30 Apr 16
CH624.02.2	Working with Warwickshire County Council	0%	CH624.02 Tenancy Sustainment		30 Apr 16
CH624.02.3	Work with public health to develop joint approaches to assisting homeless and those at risk of homelessness	0%	CH624.02 Tenancy Sustainment		31 Dec 15
CH624.03.3	Review the Private Rented Sector Bond Scheme	0%	CH624.03 Increase private rented sector options for people in housing need		01 Oct 15
CH625.01	Bring empty homes back into use:	83%	CH625 Private Sector Housing - Action Plan	28 Jun 16	31 Mar 16
CH625.01.1	Identify and implement solutions for those properties that have been empty for more than two years	50%	CH625.01 Bring empty homes back into use:	28 Jun 16	31 Mar 16
CH625.02.1	Review the effectiveness of the existing portfolio of loans to help home-owners improve their properties	0%	CH625.02 Improved private-sector housing conditions		31 Jan 16
CH625.02.3	Implement a programme of external wall insulation improvements in Long Lawford	0%	CH625.02 Improved private-sector housing conditions		30 Jun 16

Code	Title	Progress	Parent Action	Start Date	Due Date
CH625.03.1	Increase opportunities to refer applicants to private sector housing	0%	CH625.03 Working more closely with private sector landlords		31 Dec 15
CH625.03.3	Introduce criteria for assessing the quality of landlords and properties that we refer people on to	0%	CH625.03 Working more closely with private sector landlords		30 Apr 16
CH625.03.5	Identify incentives for private-sector landlords to work with the council	0%	CH625.03 Working more closely with private sector landlords		31 Mar 06
CH625.04.3	Develop projects to sustain floating support and help people to become tenancy-ready / sustain their tenancy	0%	CH625.04 Increase support and housing for potentially vulnerable home owners and tenants		31 Jan 16
CH625.04.4	Identify a sustainable local solution to support homeowners at risk of repossession	0%	CH625.04 Increase support and housing for potentially vulnerable home owners and tenants		31 Jan 16
CH625.04.5	Develop a mechanism for providing advice and information for households living in the private sector	0%	CH625.04 Increase support and housing for potentially vulnerable home owners and tenants		30 Jun 16
CIS407	Income Management System development	90%	<i>Council misc</i> Carry out innovative and high-quality business activities that aim to meet best practice and legal obligations	19 Aug14	31 Mar 15
CIS408	Retention and Disposal module for Document Management System	0%	<i>Council misc</i> Carry out innovative and high-quality business activities that aim to meet best practice and legal obligations		31 Mar 16
HS501 EqIA	Undertake Equality Impact Assessment	0%	HS501 Implement Homelessness Strategy		30 Jun 16
HS501	Implement Homelessness Strategy	0%	<i>People misc</i> Provide events and services that support councillors, members of the public and internal customers of all types	03 Dec 15	30 Jun 16
HS501.2	Implement action plan	0%	HS501 Implement Homelessness Strategy		30 Jun 16
HS519	Development of Control Centre (Sheltered Housing Side)	62%	Council 2 Improve service delivery via customer-focused reviews and the development of our staff	17 Feb 15	30 Sep 15
HS519.09	Develop business plan	75%	HS519 Development of Control Centre (Sheltered Housing Side)	18 Dec 15	31 Aug 15
HS519.10	Market the sheltered housing control centre service	50%	HS519 Development of Control Centre Sheltered Housing Side	31 Jul 15	30 Sep 15

Sustainable Inclusive Communities

Portfolio Holders' Annual Report 2015/16

Introduction

As promised, rather than delivering two lengthy verbal reports at Budget Setting and Rent Setting, I have prepared a short annual report that will hopefully give members a flavour of what has been happening in the Sustainable Inclusive Communities portfolio.

I am grateful to officers for their support throughout the year in what has, at times, been an uncertain and rapidly-changing environment.

Thanks must also go to those partner organisations, without whom much of our work would be impossible. We should not forget also, that many hours of voluntary and community work go to support the people of Rugby, and just a small fraction of that is mentioned in this report. Through the LSP we have engaged with the public, private and voluntary sectors and, as you will read, this has led to the development of our new Regeneration Strategy which, combined with the Rugby Borough Council grants, offers real opportunities for people and organisations to come together and to help solve some of the issues that arise throughout the Borough and especially in the priority areas.

Finally, I would like to thank those members who have given their time to come to the Housing Member Conversations. These are an ideal opportunity for members to learn more about the work that we do to support some of the most vulnerable people in our society; to improve our council housing for our own tenants; and to work with the private sector to provide housing across the Borough that meets the needs of our residents now and in the future. It is also, of course, an opportunity for all members (should they so wish) to be involved in policy-making at the earliest possible stage.

We stand on the threshold of an interesting time for the Borough of Rugby, and for our residents. By working together we can truly make a difference in all aspects of people's lives.

Leigh Hunt

Sustainable Inclusive Communities Portfolio Holder

Housing Revenue Account

That budget setting for council rents had to be postponed is just the most recent indication of the speed and scale of changes in national policy that have, and will, affect the borough council's tenants.

With some of these changes, it is principally a matter of implementing national policy well at the local level: with others, difficult choices need to be made by local members. Our budget for 2016/17 takes into account some of our successes as a council in dealing with the former, whilst aiming to mitigate the impact on the Housing Revenue Account business plan by grappling with the latter.

We have set our rents to give general needs housing tenants a 1% decrease, whilst freezing rents for sheltered housing. This freeze will enable us to spend over £52,000 specifically on sheltered housing schemes.

Over the last year, the council has worked hard to continue to improve tenants' homes, and has been helped in making these improvements by implementing national policy well in Rugby.

Members are used to hearing about capital improvements to the council's stock and 2015/16 follows this broad pattern of investment with 123 new kitchens installed, 47 gas central heating systems replaced and 72 properties that have undergone a conversion from electric storage heating to cheaper, and more controllable, gas heating. Around 65 of the electric-to-gas conversions benefitted from a free gas-main installation via Affordable Warmth Solutions. To help its tenants to continue to live independently at home, the council has carried out approximately 25 bathroom adaptations: where a change in how we work has resulted in savings of around £800 per installation compared to last year.

To this, now familiar, litany of improvements, I am able to add news of the investment in the major window and door replacement programme, designed, in part, to reduce heating bills and improve comfort for our residents. In the first year of the three-year programme, we completed just over 1,000 properties, investing around £4m in new windows and composite doors. I'm pleased to be able to reassure members that the council is on target to complete all its homes within the three-year programme.

Members will recall that this major programme has been compressed to three years from the original plan of twelve years in recognition of the pressing need to help tenants to afford to heat their homes. A strength of this capital investment has been the financial benefit to the council of a reduction in the amount spent on reactive repairs on window, doors and their frames.

Further service improvements come on line following the new IT system going live on 1 April as planned, creating more capacity in the service and better scheduling of reactive repairs.

These further improvements will build on high levels of tenants' satisfaction with the repairs service, both that provided in-house and through the council's contractors. In the first three quarters of this year, the repairs service received 159 compliments compared to 23 complaints: of which 17 were not upheld.

The re-invigorated right-to-buy scheme has continued to reduce the council's stock, with 30 homes sold in the first three quarters of this financial year compared to 34 for the whole of last year. However, although it was recently announced that £46.5m has been handed back to the Treasury by other councils, unable to spend these receipts, I am pleased to reassure members that Rugby is working to avoid doing this by using its receipts from sales to buy four homes this year.

As members will recall, the service has been dealing with the impact of a raft of changes to the welfare system that have had the potential to impact on the council's income.

The review of the estates management service was designed to make the collection of income sustainable in light of changes to the wider welfare system. There have been some successes, but there remain some emerging challenges to overcome.

From having 122 tenants wanting to move as a result of the under-occupancy charge: not one person has been evicted solely as a result of this change; and 71 have been successfully moved.

On the other hand we have 48 tenants who are claiming Universal Credit and owe around £38,000 (approx. £800 per tenant). Delays in paying benefits of around 12 weeks pose challenges in recovering this debt, and we anticipate that arrears will increase as more new tenants start claiming Universal Credit.

The reviewed team is, however, in better shape to meet this challenge, working much more closely with customers in taking preventative action sooner and taking out waste processes.

We will continue to work on improvements to meet the forthcoming challenges presented by the impact of the Housing and Planning Bill, such as changes to the Local Housing Allowance that will affect new tenants signing up from April 2016.

The council has continued to focus on reducing the time that properties remain empty to make much-needed homes available more quickly and reduce rent loss. This focus has resulted in the team reducing the average void period on vacant properties from the start of 2015 to the end of the year by approximately 23 days. There is still work to do to reduce this further, principally following the introduction of the new IT system, but this reduction will result in the council bringing in additional revenue of approximately £70,000 over a year.

This year it is anticipated that we will see the fruits of the review of income management of the service, with the income collection percentage of 99.96 for Q3 of this year being the highest rate of collection for any quarter in recent memory, despite the increasingly difficult environment.

We take our responsibilities as a landlord seriously:

We took firm action in response to learning two of our tenants were using their homes to cultivate cannabis. Both households were evicted.

We ran a responsible pet awareness project and microchipping event over the summer, where more than 140 dogs – half of which belong to our tenants – were registered.

The Intensive Housing Management Support Officer has already supported 40 vulnerable tenants. Activities have included maximising income (which helps tenants to pay their rent), budgeting

support, completing applications for benefits and grants (to pay for basic furniture), and helping people to access specialist support; such as treatment for mental-health issues and advice on independent living skills (cooking, cleaning and basic home improvements).

We are now letting our homes more quickly – down from 51 days per property at the beginning of 2015 to an average of 36 days in the second half of the year. In turn, void losses have reduced from an average of £658 per month to £498.

As reported to council this time last year, Rugby had led a successful countywide bid (save Stratford) to secure DCLG funding of £185,000 to prevent homelessness in Warwickshire amongst vulnerable young people aged 16-25 and adults with low-level mental-health. The resulting ASH Project started on 1 April 2015 for two-year period to support these groups to sustain tenancies and, ultimately, prevent homelessness. Between April 2015 and December 2015, 73 people accessed the service across Warwickshire; 20 of these were assisted within Rugby.

Achievements across Warwickshire during this period include: 34 people sustained their tenancy for at least six months, 10 people found accommodation and 14 people secured employment, training, educational or voluntary placements. In Rugby, four people sustained their tenancy for at least six months or more, one found accommodation and three secured employment, training, education or voluntary placements.

General Fund

Rugby's continuing growth and success as a town comes with some challenges. The last year has continued to be busy for people looking for homes in Rugby, with continuing high demand for homes of all tenures.

In these circumstances, the council's development of the housing options service has been shown to be farsighted and timely. Although the numbers using this drop-in service have continued to rise to, on average, 130 interviews a week, the quality and consistency of the advice given has improved: aided by a team growing in experience and now assisted by a new IT system.

This investment in people and software gives bespoke advice at the first point of contact, and shows its worth in the amount of homelessness prevented. Preventions doubled in the last two quarters of 2015 compared to the same period in the previous year [162 vs 81]. This doubling of prevention is mitigating the number of people who present as homeless at crisis point.

However, to meet the continuing rise in homelessness, the housing options service is rolling out a Private Sector Leasing (PSL) scheme and has just let its first home under this scheme. The scheme comes with a number of benefits: It will free up council homes which should allow more 'churn' within council stock and is a much cheaper method of providing temporary accommodation than bed and breakfast: one week's spend on B&B is around the same as one month's spend on PSL for the same sized family.

Homeless households will have better access to suitable accommodation and increased opportunities for move on into settled accommodation. The council will be able to use resources more effectively and forge stronger relations with the local private-rented sector.

We worked with housing association partners to build 58 new affordable homes in the borough. This not only helps to meet housing need but also creates revenue for the council in terms of council tax and the new homes bonus

This council prides itself on being fair to its many different communities. Over the last year, the council has completely refurbished the Woodside Park caravan site using funding from the Homes and Communities Agency. The refurbishment of the existing twelve pitches, and provision of six more on redundant land, has benefited this community, benefitted the council by making the site more financially self-sustaining and reducing the potential for expensive fly-tipping: and benefitted all the other communities in Rugby by preventing unauthorised encampments and protecting the borough's green-belt. It is this commitment to fairness that is recognised through the Equality Framework for Local Government Excellence Standard, due for re-inspection next year.

As always, the council continues to work to help people to live independently. The Control Centre has, to date, installed 174 private lifelines and has estimated £33,000 income up until the end of the financial year.

Local Strategic Partnership and RBC grants

The Local Strategic Partnership brings together organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. The partners work together to identify specific issues, to share knowledge and to reduce duplication and waste.

A large part of the LSP's work this year has been in developing the refreshed Regeneration Strategy, which continues to bind local communities, partners and the council to tackling the principal issues in Rugby's priority areas. The Pilot affordable warmth project for Benn ward supported by the Council in partnership with Act on Energy and the Rugby Credit Union shows our determination to work together to make change in the areas that need it most.

Helping to drive this change is the revised grants process, which is now more closely aligned to achieving the objectives of the regeneration strategy. The process is fine-tuned so that the resulting grants are allocated swiftly to support organisations in getting their projects off the ground quickly and safely.

2015/16 saw increased emphasis on safeguarding issues with organisations that were provisionally allocated a grant having to submit their child protection policies where relevant. Working with Warwickshire Children and Voluntary Youth Service (WCVYS) we ensured that the policies are fit for purpose. In doing so, we identified an organisation that did not have the necessary child protection policies. The organisation has since worked closely with the council and WCVYS and has received training and support to help them write and adopt the appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

<i>Name of Meeting</i>	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<i>Date of Meeting</i>	14 July 2016
<i>Report Title</i>	Finance and Performance Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 4
<i>Ward Relevance</i>	All
<i>Contact Officer</i>	Paul Ansell, Scrutiny Officer, Tel: (01788) 533591
<i>Summary</i>	This report provides an overview of the council's spending and performance position at the year-end 2015/16. It concentrates on indicators that were underperforming during the final quarter of 2015/16. The information is extracted from Item 8 of the Cabinet agenda for 27 June 2016.
<i>Financial Implications</i>	As detailed in the report
<i>Risk Management Implications</i>	None
<i>Environmental Implications</i>	None
<i>Legal Implications</i>	None
<i>Equality and Diversity</i>	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

Public Report to the Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 July 2016

Finance and Performance Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 4

Summary

This report provides an overview of the council's spending and performance position at the year-end 2015/16. It concentrates on indicators that were underperforming during the final quarter of 2015/16. The information is extracted from Item 8 of the Cabinet agenda for 27 June 2016.

1. BACKGROUND

The Brooke and Whittle Overview and Scrutiny Committees alternately consider quarterly finance and performance extracted from the reports that are submitted to Cabinet.

The Head of Resources will give an introduction at the meeting, concentrating on the financial indicators that have been consistently red and providing additional detail where requested.

2. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

A report on financial performance to the end of Quarter 4 is attached at Appendix 1. The report is an exception report showing those budget headings that are showing red; in other words, where there is a variance from the target of more than £10,000. Budget headings are included in the report if they were showing as red at the end of Quarter 4. The column indicating the percentage variance from budgeted expenditure aids the understanding of occasions when a £10,000 variance has, for valid reasons of financial control, triggered the red signal, even though the variance may be of little significance in comparison with the total budget. The reasons for variances are attached at Appendix 1A.

In the past, scrutiny committees only received exception reports about General Fund revenue expenditure. As a new departure, the report to the Whittle Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 March included General Fund capital and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital, and this report continues this.

Members are asked to consult Item 8 of the [27 June Cabinet papers](#) for a full commentary on financial performance at year-end 2015/16 and also to bring that report to the meeting with them. Members who need help in finding Cabinet papers online will find detailed instructions at the end of this report.

3. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The table of underperforming performance indicators is attached at Appendix 2.

The decreasing use of target-based indicators is reducing the usefulness of the customary way of presenting exception data to the committee. A judgement has to be made on when an adverse trend exists to the extent that it needs to be reported to Cabinet. Background information is often also required to explain the values reported for indicators. Also, data may be missing, perhaps because the frequency of reporting by an external data source does not match the cycle of reporting to Cabinet. There is then an issue of whether the indicator in question should be included in the exception report.

The need to review the way in which performance data is reported coincides with an imminent change in reporting that has been hastened by the current restructuring of the Council's services but which may well have happened anyway. For the time being, the performance tables reported to Cabinet are arguably more useful to members as a gauge of performance than the Appendix 2 exception report.

4. CHANGES IN REPORTING TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Scrutiny Officer is retiring on 24 July and his post is to be disestablished. This will result in a number of changes to officer roles in relation to scrutiny. The details of these are currently being agreed, but essentially it means that much of the work of supporting overview and scrutiny activity will be carried out by the relevant service officers without a scrutiny officer (or equivalent) acting as an intermediary or facilitator.

In the case of Finance and Performance reporting, the Head of Corporate Resources (under whom finance and performance management are brought within the same service) will report direct to OSCs. Members will be asked to use the Cabinet Finance and Performance reports rather than being provided with the exception reports that the Scrutiny Officer has until now produced by selective extraction of data from the Cabinet reports and the RPMS (Rugby Performance Management System).

It will become even more important for members to use RPMS to delve deeper into the information, for example to identify trends, make comparisons between time periods and to understand the stories behind the data. Because of the difficulty in giving a true picture of performance (as discussed in section 3 above) and the resultant superficiality of the exception reports, members would have needed to do this anyway in order to carry out their role effectively.

The usual Appendix 3, showing historical charts for underperforming non-financial indicators, together with reasons for underperformance, has not been produced for the present meeting. This will give members the opportunity to try out the new way of working and to comment on it at the meeting.

Members are reminded that Christopher Trezise, Corporate Performance Management Officer in the Change Management Team, will be pleased to provide members with one-to-one tuition on the RPMS. Please contact him [by email](#) or on 01788 533516. The Change Management Team is now in Corporate Resources, where it will continue to offer the same support to members and officers that it always has done.

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting: 14 July 2016
Subject Matter: Finance and Performance Monitoring 2015/16 Quarter 4

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers relating to this item other than the report to Cabinet referred to in the body of the report.

How to find Cabinet papers online

Regular computer users will have no difficulty in searching for Cabinet, committee and Council papers. However, in case you need help, here is a detailed guide.

If you are reading this on your computer [click here](#) for a direct link to the 27 June Cabinet papers.

If you are reading this in paper format, do the following.

Go to <https://www.rugby.gov.uk/meetings>

Click the Cabinet meeting referred to

Click *Download the Agenda*. This gives you all the agenda papers for that Cabinet meeting in one continuous document. If you need to print the Finance and Performance report, specify the PDF page range you require. In the case of the 27 June meeting, this is pages 35-82. It's a lot of paper, so be as selective as you can. Ideally, in future, don't dispose of the Cabinet papers delivered to you until you know you do not need them anymore.

Summary Financial Performance Data - General Fund Revenue Budget - Outturn 2015/16
Indicators 'red' at year end (over £10,000 variance from revised budget)

Key to abbreviations:

Heads of Service are as before management restructure
 HCIS - Head of Customer and Information Services
 ID/AN = Executive Directors

HBT = Head of Business Transformation
 HoR = Head of Resources

HES = Head of Environmental Services
 HPR = Head of Planning and Recreation

HHP = Head of Housing & Property

Description	Head of Service	Original Budget 2015/16 £	Revised budget excluding carry forwards £	Budgets carried fwd to 2016/17 £	Revised budget 2015/16 £	Year-End 2015/16 £	Variance from revised budget £ %	
1. GENERAL FUND – REVENUE								
Economy, Development and Culture								
Art Gallery & Museum	HCIS	+789,080	+817,980		+817,980	+775,630	-42,350	-5
Car Parks	HES	-232,670	-232,670		-232,670	-122,860	+109,810	47
Misc. Highways Services	HES	+390,530	+414,650	-35,000	+379,650	+315,230	-64,420	-17
Planning Services	HPR	+578,080	+577,970		+577,970	+434,920	-143,050	-25
Public Conveniences	HES	+85,010	+85,010		+85,010	+69,500	-15,510	-18
Queens Diamond Jubilee Centre	HPR	+228,220	+231,220		+231,220	+181,700	-49,520	-21
Sports & Recreation	HPR	+330,080	+330,080		+330,080	+312,450	-17,630	-5
The Benn Hall	HPR	+86,180	+86,180	-3,500	+82,680	+114,540	+31,860	39
Tool Shed Cafe	HPR	-2,540	-2,540		-2,540	+24,870	+27,410	1,079
Visitor Centre	HCIS	+130,460	+136,660		+136,660	+153,090	+16,430	12
Town Centre CCTV & Management	HES	+271,230	+271,230		+271,230	+251,550	-19,680	-7
Resources and Corporate Governance								
Electoral Services	HBT	208,720	208,720		208,720	170,240	-38,480	-18
Business Transformation	HBT	0	-14,000		-14,000	13,060	+27,060	193
Central Telephone Service	HCIS	0	0		0	-11,050	-11,050	∞
Executive Directors	ID/AN	0	0		0	154,550	+154,550	∞
Corporate Property Services	HHP	0	-39,500		-39,500	-52,420	-12,920	-33
Council Tax & NDR Collection	HoR	573,740	552,400		552,400	513,220	-39,180	-7
Customer & Information Services	HCIS	0	-50,370	9,080	-41,290	-173,080	-131,790	-319
Customer Support Services	HCIS	0	7,400		7,400	-9,320	-16,720	-226
Democratic & Legal Services	HBT	0	-27,000		-27,000	-56,980	-29,980	-111
General Financial Services	HoR	0	-41,480		-41,480	-8,220	+33,260	80
Resources	HoR	0	14,070	-5,600	8,470	-16,490	-24,960	-295
Works Services Unit & Depot	HES	-85,890	-110,040	15,160	-94,880	-148,140	-53,260	-56

Description	Head of Service	Original Budget 2015/16 £	Revised budget excluding carry forwards £	Budgets carried fwd to 2016/17 £	Revised budget 2015/16 £	Year-End 2015/16 £	Variance from revised budget £ %	
Sustainable Environment								
Cemeteries	HES	172,920	172,920		+172,920	100,230	-72,690	-42
Crematorium	HES	-143,980	-143,980		-143,980	-23,400	+120,580	84
Land Drainage	HES	54,190	54,190		+54,190	36,790	-17,400	-32
Parks, Recreation Grounds & Open Spaces	HES	1,363,110	1,362,580		+1,362,580	1,443,710	+81,130	6
Regulatory Services	HES	1,094,600	1,086,030		+1,086,030	1,021,650	-64,380	-6
Waste Collection & Recycling	HES	2,614,340	2,822,810		+2,822,810	2,811,310	-11,500	0
Sustainable Inclusive Communities								
Housing Options Team	HHP	349,470	354,430		+354,430	391,990	+37,560	11
Housing Benefits Payments	HoR	2,020	2,020		+2,020	-109,230	-111,250	-5,507
Welfare Services	HHP	-19,140	-19,140		-19,140	-37,320	-18,180	-95
2. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - REVENUE								
Rent income from dwellings	HHP	-16,517,320	0	0	-16,517,320	-16,732,110	-214,790	-1
Charges for services	HHP	-1,376,610	0	0	-1,376,610	-1,355,450	+21,160	2
Contributions towards expenditure	HHP	-185,200	-88,780	0	-273,980	-233,090	+40,890	15
Supervision and Management	HHP	4,199,000	77,640	-64,560	+4,212,080	3,998,240	-213,840	-5
Depreciation & Impairment	HHP	3,697,350	0	0	+3,697,350	1,916,630	-1,780,720	-48
Provision for Bad or Doubtful Debt	HHP	125,000	0	0	+125,000	50,190	-74,810	-60
Interest Payable & Similar Charges	HHP	1,326,660	0	0	+1,326,660	1,286,920	-39,740	-3
Interest & Investment Income	HHP	-78,670	0	0	-78,670	-110,780	-32,110	-41
Appropriation to Major Repairs Reserve	HHP	0	0	0	0	1,842,340	+1,842,340	∞

3. GENERAL FUND – CAPITAL

Description	Head of Service	Revised Budget 2015/16 £	Actual Spend 2015/16 £	Variance from Budget £	Savings (-) Overspend (+) 2015/16 £	Slippage into 2016/17 £
Economy, Development and Culture						
Benn Hall Refurbishment	HPR	61,000	14,690	-46,310	0	-46,310
Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre Project	HPR	50,000	27,980	-22,020	0	-22,020
Resources and Corporate Governance						
IT Renewal Programme	HCIS	210,910	199,020	-11,890	-11,890	0
Purchase of Vehicles	HES	1,733,330	995,760	-737,570	-168,000	-569,570
CSW Superfast Broadband	HCIS	144,000	84,050	-59,950	0	-59,950
Information Retention and Disposal	HCIS	19,080	5,250	-13,830	0	-13,830
Cattle Market Site	HHP	100,000	40,820	-59,180	0	-59,180
Sustainable Environment						
Crematorium Project	HES	122,000	64,390	-57,610	0	-57,610
Cemetery Infrastructure Work	HES	32,290	19,740	-12,550	-5,690	-6,860
Open Spaces Refurbishment	HES	514,480	490,950	-23,530	+234,160	-257,690
Carbon Management Plan	HHP	877,400	188,780	-688,620	0	-688,620
Long Lawford Play Areas Refurbishments	HES	0	23,450	+23,450	+23,450	0
Sustainable Inclusive Communities						
Private Sector Renovation Loans	HHP	163,650	13,170	-150,480	-100,480	-50,000
Disabled Facilities Grant	HHP	445,440	417,410	-28,030	-28,030	0
Woodside Gypsy & Traveller Caravan Site	HHP	691,610	836,770	+145,160	+145,160	0

4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT – CAPITAL

Description	Head of Service	Revised Budget 2015/16 £	Actual Spend 2015/16 £	Variance from Budget £	Savings (-) Overspend (+) 2015/16 £	Slippage into 2016/17 £
Housing Management System	HCIS	109,460	48,990	-60,470	0	-60,470
Housing Repairs Service - IT System	HCIS	210,000	188,360	-21,640	0	-21,640
Disabled Adaptions	HHP	226,060	191,570	-34,490	-34,490	0
Kitchen Modifications	HHP	422,390	472,480	+50,090	+50,090	0
Heating Upgrades	HHP	210,550	184,040	-26,510	-26,510	0
Electric to Gas Conversions	HHP	655,080	630,640	-24,440	+75,560	-100,000
Energy Efficiency Long Lawford external cladding	HHP	400,000	0	-400,000	0	-400,000
Bathroom Modifications	HHP	518,950	0	-518,950	-518,950	0
Lifeline Renewal Programme	HHP	30,000	8,880	-21,120	-21,120	0
Finlock Gutter Improvements	HHP	27,960	16,350	-11,610	-11,610	0
Rebuilding Retaining Walls	HHP	86,000	97,460	+11,460	+11,460	0
CCTV upgrades	HHP	99,670	55,030	-44,640	0	-44,640
Strategic Land Acquisition	HHP	700,000	646,630	-53,370	0	-53,370
Purchase of Council Houses	HHP	564,400	261,500	-302,900	-186,400	-116,500
Solar PV	HHP	132,400	960	-131,440	0	-131,440
Housing Window Replacement	HHP	4,000,000	3,424,430	-575,570	-3,430	-572,140

Reasons for Financial Variances as reported to Cabinet on 27 June 2016

1. GENERAL FUND – REVENUE

Sustainable Environment

Art Gallery and Museum – budget variance represents savings on utilities, insurances, postage and distribution and an overachievement of income on room hire.

Car Parks – variance reflects the underachievement of income from Penalty Charge Notices and Pay and Display income due to free parking during the Rugby World Cup and Christmas period. Additional R&M of £44,000 was required at the John Barford car park.

Misc Highways Services – street furniture works not being carried out due to resources utilised elsewhere including Traveller Prevention, Rugby World Cup and Capital Projects.

Planning Services – an overachievement of Planning income within the financial year, it is proposed £142,000 is transferred to the budget stability reserve.

Public Conveniences – savings due to a change in management of the cleaning.

Queen Diamond Jubilee Centre – an increased 2015/16 profit share from the management company, and small savings on utilities.

Sport and Recreation – budget variance reflects salary savings due to vacant Sport and Recreation post, service to be reviewed in 2016/17.

The Benn Hall – higher than anticipated staff costs and a lower than expected sales income, offset with a rebate for business rates

Tool Shed Cafe – higher than anticipated staff costs and a lower than expected sales income.

Visitor Centre – budget variance due to additional setup costs associated with the Rugby World Cup celebrations.

Town Centre CCTV and Management – budget variance represents the reassessment of contract with Rugby First resulting in a saving in 2015/16.

Resources and Corporate Governance

Electoral Services – savings realised as a result of the service operating in a more efficient way following a review.

Business Transformation – staffing costs associated with a management restructure, offset with small salary underspends.

Central Telephone Service – variance reflect how revised contracts have resulted in savings within the service.

Executive Directors – budget variance represents the provision made for the proposed management restructure. Although the costs will be incurred in 2016/17 accounting standards require the expenditure to be recognised in 2015/16.

Corporate Property Services – savings achieved on utilities, offset with small variances on salaries.

Council Tax and NDR Collection – favourable budget variance represents the level of costs recovered which were greater than budgeted.

Customer and Information Services – revenue savings from officer time spent on the Housing Maintenance System, capital projects and Counter-Fraud project. Additional savings on hardware and software maintenance plus reduced annual contract costs.

Customer Support Services – salary savings due to vacant posts and various small savings for postage and stationary purchases.

Democratic and Legal Services – budget variance mainly relates to the overachievement of recovery of legal fees, plus salary savings.

General Financial Services – additional broker fees for securing loans, in addition to increase payment charges from card providers.

Sustainable Environment

Cemeteries – the service has received higher than expected burial and licence income.

Crematorium – lower than anticipated income from memorials and cremations and adverse variances on special events and repairs and maintenance. Overall the service generated a surplus of £23,000 for the Council

Land Drainage – budget variance reflects lower demand for the service during 2015/16.

Parks, Recreation Ground and Open Spaces – Budget variance relates to costs listed below:

- 1) £41,000 variance on maintenance of equipment following Health and Safety inspections on play areas
- 2) Use of external contractors £23,000 for various repair and maintenance costs, including fencing repairs and additional cleaning of parks changing rooms
- 3) £10,000 on insurance excess for vandalism
- 4) £10,000 underachievement of rental income

Regulatory Services – salary savings pending a service restructure, plus recovered officer costs through Landlord Enforcement.

Waste Collection and Recycling – budget variance is due to the introduction of the recycling gate fee, which has been offset with savings passed on from internal contractor.

Sustainable Inclusive Communities

Housing Options Team – the adverse variance relates to the increased number of homelessness persons being housed in B&B accommodation, which is not fully offset through Housing Benefits. Plus an increase in the bad debt provision of £26,000.

Housing Benefits Payments – the favourable variance is due a reduction in the proportion of benefit payments that the Council partially funds, with a corresponding increase in the proportion that are wholly funded from benefit subsidy.

Welfare Services – additional income due to a greater take up of the Lifeline service than anticipated in original budgets.

2. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - REVENUE

Rent income from dwellings – overachievement of income on temporary accommodation recharged to the General Fund in respect of homelessness provision.

Charges for services/Contributions towards expenditure – variance arising from void levels for service charge properties; conversion from Sheltered Housing to General Needs resulting in reduced charges for Warden Services; reduced HRA garage income; and a reduction in the level of staff time apportioned to capital projects against original estimates.

Supervision and Management – variance arising from: vacant posts within establishment; reduction in utility costs arising from continuing better procurement practices and closer monitoring of usage; reduction in new equipment/maintenance costs within Sheltered Accommodation and the Control Centre (pending installation of new software/CCTV cameras in 2016/17).

Depreciation and Impairment/Appropriation to Major Repairs Reserve – the budget for depreciation is aligned to the Major Repairs Allowance granted via the former Housing Subsidy system; actual depreciation charges were less than the allowance calculation. In light of this £1,842,340 has been contributed to the Major Repairs Reserve to fund future capital expenditure.

Provision for Bad or Doubtful Debt – reduction in rent arrears written off in year based on the age profile of the debt, resulting in a reduced contribution for 2015/16.

Interest and Investment Income – slippage within the HRA capital programme and movements in market interest rates have resulted in reduced interest costs and higher returns on investment income.

3. GENERAL FUND – CAPITAL

Economy, Development and Culture

Benn Hall Refurbishment – the balance of £46,310 is requested to be carried forward to 2016/17 for deferred expenditure arising from staff resource commitments.

Queen Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre Project – £22,020 is requested to be carried forward to 2016/17 for remaining snagging issues.

Resources and Corporate Governance

ICT renewals – a saving of £11,890 is to be returned due to staff resources being deployed to higher priority projects.

Vehicles – a carry forward of £569,570 is requested for vehicles being bought later than planned, due to extension of vehicles lives, and a saving of £168,000 is to be returned.

CSW Superfast Broadband – the balance of £59,950 is requested to be carried forward for ongoing costs.

Information Retention – the remaining budget of £13,830 is requested to be carried forward to finalise testing works and implementation.

Cattle Market Site – the remaining budget of £59,180 is requested to be carried forward for ongoing works for site security, development, and marketing.

Sustainable Environment

Crematorium Project – the remaining balance of £57,610 is requested to be carried forward for residual costs relating to contract retentions and memorialisation.

Cemetery Infrastructure – £5,690 is to be returned as a saving on salary recharges. £6,860 is requested to be carried forward for ongoing work.

Open Spaces – adverse variance of £234,160 primarily due to: £20,000 - footpaths at Whinfield Recreation Ground £34,160 - Pocket parks, of which £24,160 is externally funded. This is a new initiative that was not included in original budgets. £180,000 - Parkfield Road, of which £38,350 is externally funded, adverse variance is primarily related additional costs related to unexpected contamination of land including the removal of asbestos. Carry forwards of £257,690 are requested for: £20,000 street furniture £20,000 pocket parks £215,160 for Hollowell Way £2,530 for Parkfield Road.

Carbon Management – the remaining balance of £688,620 is requested to be carried forward for remaining installations.

Capital Expenditure Section 106 – year-end expenditure of £29,450 will be funded from developer contributions.

Sustainable Inclusive Communities

Public Sector Renovation Loans – £50,000 is requested to be carried forward for ongoing work and the balance is to be returned as a saving.

Disabled Facilities Grant – ongoing contractual commitments for approved DFGs totalling £89,100 will be reviewed against the 2016/17 budget allocation of £350,000.

Woodside Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Site – an adverse variance of £43,300 relates to the purchase of an additional plot at the site, however this will be wholly funded via LPSA 2 grant. Other cost variances of £101,810 arising from environmental works, primarily relating to the removal of Japanese knotweed and interceptor tanks, will be met from borrowing.

4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT – CAPITAL

Housing Management System – the remaining balance of £60,470 is requested to be carried forward for ongoing work on the Northgate OHMS system, delayed during implementation of One Serve repairs and maintenance scheduling / job costing software.

Housing Repairs Service – the balance of £21,640 is requested to be carried forward for final costs relating to One Serve repairs and maintenance scheduling / job costing software.

Various savings to be transferred to **Electric to Gas Conversions** to facilitate a carry forward of £100,000 to 2016/17 and to offset the variances on **Kitchen Modifications** (see 4) and **Rebuilding Retaining Walls** (see 7).

Kitchen Modifications – the variance relates to a higher proportion of take-up (less tenant refusals) than anticipated in budget estimates for 2015/16 and will be offset by savings in other project areas (see 3).

Energy Efficiency Long Lawford External Cladding – the budget is requested to be carried forward pending re-procurement.

Bathrooms – the budget is to be returned as a saving following a reconfiguration of programme requirements arising in 2015/16.

Rebuilding Retaining Walls – the adverse variance is to be offset against saving returns.

CCTV Upgrades – the balance is requested to be carried forward to 2016/17 to implement phase 2 of the project (camera installations).

Strategic Land Acquisition – the balance is requested to be carried forward for refurbishment work at Victoria House, Albert Street following purchase in March 2016.

Purchase of Council Houses – £116,500 is requested to be carried forward for an outstanding purchase commitment and the balance is to be returned as a saving.

Solar PV – the balance is requested to be carried forward for the completion of installations during phase 3 of the project (Lesley Souter House, Albert Square, Tanser Court).

Housing Window Replacement – £572,140 is requested to be carried forward for ongoing works not finalised as at 31st March and the balance is returned as a saving on salary recharges in 2015/16.

Performance Indicators – Quarter 4 2015/16 – Exception Report

KEY TO STATUS	
↓ x	No target, but performance worse than previous results (high figure = good performance)
↑ x	No target, but performance worse than previous results (low figure = good performance)

Economy, Development and Culture

PI Code	Short name	Last update	Latest value	Status	Responsible officer
LI086	Working age people on out of work benefits	Mar 2016	1.20%	↑ x	Sarah Alexander

Resources and Corporate Governance

PI Code	Short name	Last update	Latest value	Status	Responsible officer
LI00	Benefits – average end-to-end time for claims (days)	Mar 2016	36.48	↑ x	Dave Wortley
LI132	Number of contracts where Legal have completed their activities	Mar 2016	0	↓ x	Team Legal

Sustainable Environment

PI Code	Short name	Last update	Latest value	Status	Responsible officer
LI080	Improved street and environmental cleanliness – number of fly-tipping incidents	Q4 2015/16	250	↑ x	Gill Russell

Sustainable Inclusive Communities

PI Code	Short name	Last update	Latest value	Status	Responsible officer
LI214a	Number of homeless preventions made by RBC	Q4 2015/16	57	↓ x	Andrew Odom

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

<i>Name of Meeting</i>	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<i>Date of Meeting</i>	14 July 2016
<i>Report Title</i>	Benn Hall – Two Year Marketing and Business Plan
<i>Ward Relevance</i>	All
<i>Contact Officer</i>	Paul Ansell, Scrutiny Officer, Tel: (01788) 533591
<i>Summary</i>	<p>This paper reports on the work of the sub-group set up by the committee to scrutinise the Benn Hall business plan.</p> <p>The committee is asked to consider its role in relation to the monitoring and review of progress in implementing the plan, either by placing it in the committee work programme or by reconvening the sub-group early in 2017.</p>
<i>Financial Implications</i>	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
<i>Risk Management Implications</i>	There are no risk management implications arising from this report.
<i>Environmental Implications</i>	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
<i>Legal Implications</i>	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
<i>Equality and Diversity</i>	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

Report to the Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 July 2016

Benn Hall – Two Year Marketing and Business Plan

Summary

This paper reports on the work of the sub-group set up by the committee to scrutinise the Benn Hall business plan.

The committee is asked to consider its role in relation to the monitoring and review of progress in implementing the plan, either by placing it in the committee work programme or by reconvening the sub-group early in 2017.

1. BACKGROUND

On 10 March, the committee received a presentation by the Head of Planning and Culture (now Head of Growth and Investment) on the performance, budgets and business plan for the Benn Hall.

A task group review on the Benn Hall had been included in the 2016/17 work programme but it was evident from the presentation that a decision on the business plan for the hall needed to go to Cabinet by the end of June 2016. This timescale meant that it would not be possible to set up a task group in the normal way or consider the matter again at this committee. The committee therefore set up an informal sub-group on the subject.

The sub-group met on three occasions and was attended by Cllrs Claire Edwards (who chaired the group), Gillias, Pacey-Day and Sandison.

2. WHAT THE SUB-GROUP DID

The sub-group was taken through the issues relating to the operation of the Benn Hall in three stages:

Meeting 1

- Strengths and opportunities
- Understanding our customers

Meeting 2

- Budgets and recharges
- Occupancy and booking levels
- April events – a snapshot of use of the Benn Hall

Meeting 3

- Proposed pricing structure
- Business model and objectives
- Corkage charges
- Marketing activities

In its report to Cabinet on 27 June 2016 (appended) the group made the following recommendations:

1. The approval of a two year marketing and business plan
2. A new pricing structure
3. Revised corkage charges
4. Future consideration of physical improvements to the frontage of the Benn Hall
5. A progress review after six months operation of the plan

3. CONCLUSION

The timescale necessitated the rapid setting up of the sub-group with the intention of allowing some member involvement in the development of the marketing and business plan. It was a new venture for scrutiny and it was not known how successful it would be.

In the event, it would be true to say that both members and officers found the relative informality and spontaneity of the meetings beneficial and that the work of the group resulted in improvements to the plan that would not otherwise would have been made. This is an example of how overview and scrutiny can adapt outside the usual structure of committees and task groups itself to deal with particular circumstances.

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting: 14 July 2016
Subject Matter: Benn Hall – Two Year Marketing and Business Plan

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers.

Cabinet – 27 June 2016**Recommendations of the Benn Hall Scrutiny Sub-Group
for a two year marketing and business plan****Report of the Growth and Investment Portfolio Holder****Recommendation**

1. The proposed marketing and business plan for a two year period be approved;
2. a new pricing structure for room hire, increasing charges in some examples but providing more flexibility to customers be agreed;
3. revised corkage charges to ensure income from private hire functions is maximised be agreed;
4. the feasibility of frontage improvements to the Benn Hall to improve the building's attractiveness and exposure be assessed; and
5. progress with the adopted marketing & business plan be reviewed after six months.

Introduction and current business plan

The Benn Hall has operated at a multi-functional venue since 1961. It offers room hire for community groups, businesses and functions, whilst providing a space for public events and entertainment. There are three rooms of different sizes and capacities: the Main Hall (650 standing; approximately 350 seated); Rokeby Room (approximately 100 seated) and Caldecott Room bar (approx. 20 seated). In June 2012 the Council decided to take direct management responsibility for the Benn Hall. Prior to this, an external company, DC Leisure, was responsible for running the venue on the Council's behalf.

In October 2014 Cabinet agreed to continue with this arrangement for a further three financial years from April 2015 to March 2018. A number of improvements have been made to the venue in recent years. This includes new stage lighting, a PA system and display screens in the foyer/outside the building to promote events. A new brand was developed and some fundamental marketing activities have been delivered, covering social media, regular adverts in local papers and a quarterly 'What's on' guide. An e-ticketing system was also purchased to modernise the booking system.

Following a meeting of the Brooke Scrutiny Committee in March 2016, a Benn Hall Scrutiny Sub-Group met on three occasions during April and May this year. The purpose of this sub-group was to review the current business position of the Benn Hall, develop recommendations on how it should be managed and marketed in the

future. The group looked, in detail, at current target markets, occupancy rates, pricing (in comparison to other venues in Rugby) alongside income generation opportunities with events and private functions. The process has resulted in the development of a new business and marketing plan for the Benn Hall, which looks to promote the venue more effectively and meet the needs of customers. If the proposed business and marketing plan is adopted, progress will be reviewed after six months against a set of targets identified by the group. The group also expressed the need to look at what improvements to the frontage of the Benn Hall building may be viable should the plan be successful.

Understanding the current customer base

Mosaic UK is statistical tool developed by Experian which allows businesses to understand their customer base and target groups in more detail. It is useful for the Benn Hall because it provides an insight into the groups of people who are currently visiting the venue for events – this is presented in Table 1 on the next page. Based on numbers and percentages, the most notable groups using the venue, are ‘H: Aspiring Homemakers’ and ‘L: Transient Renters’. This is significant because these groups have been highlighted as target markets in suburban areas through a wider piece of work looking at Rugby town centre.

Analysis through Mosaic UK uses comparisons between datasets i.e. the addresses of Benn Hall customers and elections data for the borough’s population as a whole. Index numbers can be used to show how common different groups are in one dataset compared to another. In this example, an Index number of 100% suggests there is an average amount of people in a particular social group who have attended events, compared the borough as a whole. Index numbers either side of 100% suggests there is likely to be differences in the groups of households who have visited the venue.

Using this method, two notable groups of household are ‘E: Suburban Stability’ and ‘F: Senior Security’. These groups have Index numbers of 120 and 108, respectively. This suggests the likelihood of these households using the venue is high. This is supported by the number of customers in these groups who are currently registered on the Benn Hall database – 184 for ‘E: Suburban Stability’ and 177 for ‘F: Senior Security’. It is important to note that although the statistics used throughout these reports are reliable, analysis using Mosaic UK only measures the likelihood of groups behaving in particular ways, rather than being able to conclude this with certainty.

Table 1: Benn Hall customers

Mosaic Group	Number of Benn Hall customers	% of Benn Hall customers	Index	Number in borough	% in borough
A: Country Living	81	4.71	51	9,346	3.12
B: Prestigious Positions	116	6.75	100	6,861	6.59
C: City Prosperity	3	0.17	180	99	17.17
D: Domestic Success	289	16.81	126	13,626	5.89
E: Suburban Stability	184	10.70	120	9,071	5.72
F: Senior Security	177	10.30	108	9,716	5.62
G: Rural Reality	80	4.65	82	5,800	4.33
H: Aspiring Homemakers	278	16.17	114	14,439	4.21
I: Urban Cohesion	9	0.52	100	536	7.46
J: Rental Hubs	43	2.50	83	3,071	5.44
K: Modest Traditions	73	4.25	126	3,451	5.30
L: Transient Renters	173	10.06	91	11,239	5.57
M: Family Basics	140	8.14	98	8,467	5.61
N: Vintage Value	55	3.20	65	4,988	4.57
O: Municipal Challenge	18	1.05	81	1,316	6.91
Total	1,719	100	100	102,026	100



Figure 1: Characteristics of Mosaic groups using the Benn Hall

Table 2 presents Index numbers in relation to the preferred communication channels for the above target groups. A number of differences and similarities can be drawn from this:

- The 'F: Senior Security' group differ significantly to others, being most receptive postal communication, rather than adapting to technological changes in society.
- Other groups have prefer the use of email and online services, with Index numbers ranging from 102% - 111%.

The 'D: Domestic Success' and 'Aspiring Homemakers' are likely to very receptive to marketing through smartphones, with Index numbers of 119% and 122%, respectively, for this variable.

Table 2 – Index numbers for preferred communication channels

Channel Preference	D: Domestic Success	H: Aspiring Homemakers	E: Suburban stability	F: Senior Security
Phone	100%	95%	96%	102%
Email	111%	110%	102%	98%
Online	105%	109%	104%	83%
Post	91%	93%	96%	111%
Shop/branch	86%	88%	105%	98%
Smartphone	119%	122%	97%	58%

Venue hire in Rugby

Figure 2 below compares the cost of the venue hire at the Benn Hall to other venues in Rugby. This is based on room hire quotes to accommodate 30 people for both half and full days. Out of the venues covered, the Benn Hall is clearly the cheapest with room hire approximately double the price for some half day quotes and up to three times more expensive in examples of full day charges.

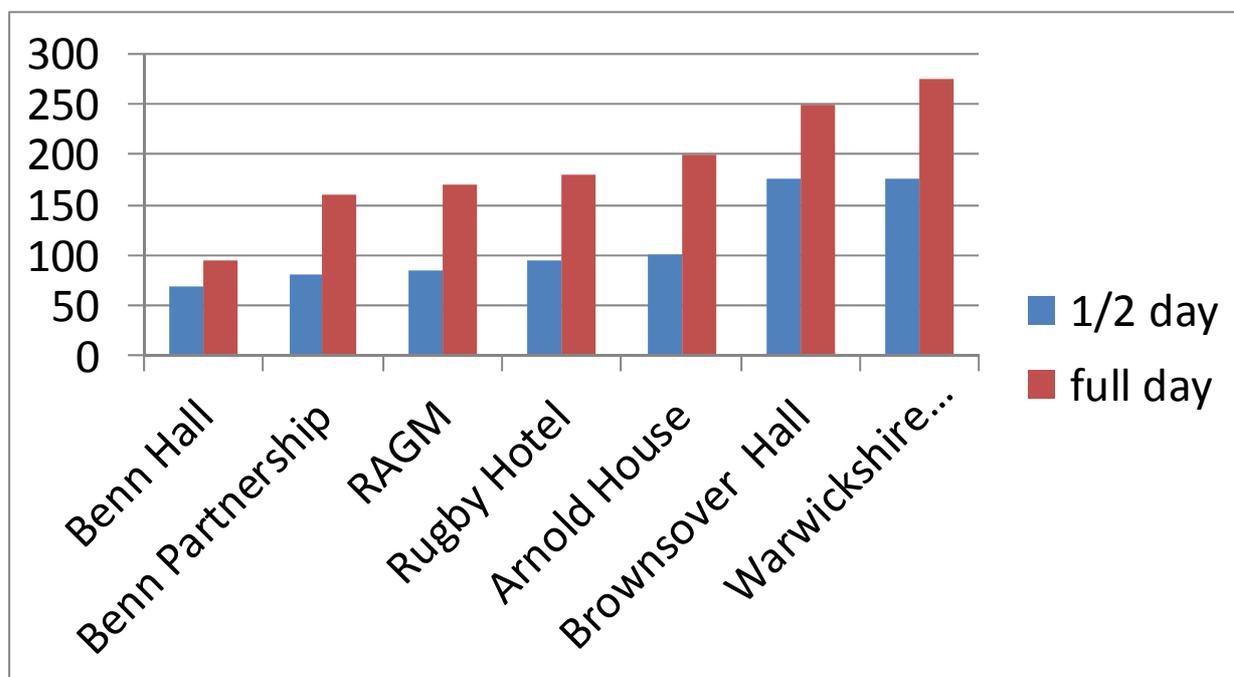


Figure 2 – Venue hire in Rugby

Proposed pricing structure

Table 3 outlines a proposed pricing structure for room hire. A number of changes have been made to the current scale of charges, demonstrated below.

- Minimum increase in room hire charges of 30% for customers, per hour.
- Removal of categorised pricing for different types of event.
- Determined by hourly rates rather than pre-determined booking slots.
- Remains realistic when considering the type and quality of service provided, when compared to other venues in Rugby.

Table 3 – Proposed new pricing structure

Day	Main	Rokeby Room	Caldecott Room	Whole building
Monday – Thursday	£30 per hour	£20 per hour	£15 per hour	£50 per hour
Friday – Sunday and bank holidays	£60 per hour	£35 per hour	£20 per hour	£100 per hour

Corkage charges

The current corkage charges for customers bringing their own alcohol and drinks into the venue are low, limiting potential income. When considered in tandem with the relatively low room hire costs there are some large scale events where bar income is low that are not profitable when fixed costs have been accounted for. To ensure necessary levels of profit can be generated from private functions, the following prices are proposed:

Soft drinks

To buy from us:	Carbonated drinks, £3 per 1.5 ltr bottle Water, £2.50 per large bottle Orange juice, £2.40 per carton
To bring in yourself:	£2.40 per head

Wine and sparkling wine

To buy from us:	Wine, £13 per bottle Sparkling wine, £16 per bottle
To bring in:	Wine, £10 per bottle Sparkling wine, £15 per bottle

Spirits

To buy from us:	£25 per 70cl bottle
To bring in:	£20 per 70cl bottle

Beer/cider

To bring in:	£1.50 per bottle/can
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The above prices remain low when compared with other similar scale venues within the local area and will be advertised prices though the venue managers will retain (and advertise) the ability to negotiate between room hire charges and corkage prices dependent on the specific details of the event.

Business objectives

The following business objectives focus primarily on business hire and private functions, due to the potential revenue from these types of bookings, whilst retaining a limited focus on Benn Hall organised events. Each objective is SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) making it easier to target marketing activities and monitor progress.

- Attract 80 hours of meeting room hire monthly for the Rokeby Room and Caldecott Bar, generating an annual income of £16,800.
- Continue to maintain relationships with the core customer base generating £60,000 annually through room bookings for community use.
- Accommodate 24 high income private hire events annually, generating £15,000 in room hire and £35,000 in bar income.

- Organise 6 Benn Hall-led events annually, generating £20,000 in ticket sales and £9,000 in bar income.

Key target groups

Marketing activities should be focused on building relationships and attracting business with the following:

1. Community groups and current customer base – maintaining relationships with groups who are regularly using the venue.
2. Group bookings for weddings and parties – attracting room bookings with potential to generate additional income through the bar.
3. Businesses and networks – encouraging meeting room hire and corporate events.

Marketing activities

To deliver the above business objectives, the below marketing activities will take place, adopting more effective and targeted approach to promoting the venue.

1. Continue to maintain the website and deliver social media activity, purchasing 'pay per click' campaigns for specific events and services.
2. Produce a quarterly events brochure to be distributed around the town centre, including pubs, restaurants, cafes and community facilities, where appropriate. Promotion of private hire events may be chargeable.
3. Maintain a database of customers and promote events through mailshots, delivered at the same time as the above publication.
4. Produce banners for events and locate these in notable town centre locations.
5. Advertising on lamppost banners near the venue (e.g. Newbold Road and Evreux Way), specifically promoting the availability of meeting room hire.
6. Attend business breakfasts and encourage organisers of networking events to use the venue, raising awareness of meeting space availability.
7. Directly market to large employers in the town and borough, which may have a need for external meeting space.
8. Link to the wider marketing strategy for the town centre, which is currently being developed, for example raising awareness of events through the free public Wi-Fi network.
9. Work with Rugby First to deliver a package of pre-entertainment offers with town centre businesses. There is potential to benefit from the 'Smile Deals' scheme which is currently being reviewed.

Whilst continuing to work towards enabling the Benn Hall to be a successful events venue, it is likely that as part of the Council's Asset Management Strategy (which will be reported to Cabinet /Council in due course) the future of the Town Hall site will be considered. Should a decision be made that affects the Benn Hall, it will be necessary to consider alternative options to ensure the requirements of the Benn Bequeath can be met. It is in the context that the timescales and parameters of this Business Plan have been set.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

<i>Name of Meeting</i>	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<i>Date of Meeting</i>	14 July 2016
<i>Report Title</i>	Review of Welfare Reform
<i>Ward Relevance</i>	All
<i>Contact Officer</i>	Paul Ansell, Scrutiny Officer, Tel: (01788) 533591
<i>Summary</i>	Members are asked to consider the future overview and scrutiny of welfare reform.
<i>Financial Implications</i>	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
<i>Risk Management Implications</i>	There are no risk management implications arising from this report.
<i>Environmental Implications</i>	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
<i>Legal Implications</i>	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
<i>Equality and Diversity</i>	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

Report to the Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 July 2016

Review of Welfare Reform

Summary

Members are asked to consider the future overview and scrutiny of welfare reform.

1. BACKGROUND

On 18 January, the committee approved a revised one-page strategy for the review of Welfare Reform refocusing the group's work on the impact of the measures announced in the 2015 Summer Budget Statement. The task group was due to resume its work on 10 February but, as reported to the committee on 10 March, most of the Summer Budget measures were at that time still going through the legislative process so there was therefore no experience on which to base any conclusions.

2. CURRENT POSITION

The Benefits Manager reports (in italics) on the current position on the Summer Budget measures as follows:

- Benefit cap to be reduced from £26,000 per year (£18,200 for single people) to £20,000 (£13,400 for single people) in this area, to be phased in from April 2016

This is due to come into effect during autumn 2016. We have received a list of customers who could potentially be affected. There are around 90 customers affected. This includes those who are affected by the current arrangements. Details of Council Tenants affected have been passed to the Housing Team, and we are also working with Housing Associations with regards to their tenants. The Boroughs and Districts within Warwickshire are also looking at commissioning Warwickshire Welfare Rights Advice service to undertake work with these customers.

- Most working-age benefits and tax credits to be frozen at 2015-16 rates for four years

This came into effect in April 2016

- Changes to tax credits and Universal Credit saving £5.8 billion a year by 2020-21, including limiting child element to 2 children for new claims and births after April 2017

No new information

- Removal of the family premium from the assessment of claims for Housing Benefit for new claims made after 1 April 2016 or where the first child is born after 1 April 2016

The implementation date was changed to May 2016 and is now in effect

- Removal of housing element from Universal Credit for customers under the age of 21 from April 2017

No new information

- Employment Support Allowance for claimants in the 'work-related activity group' to be reduced to Jobseekers Allowance rates for new claims from April 2017

No new information

- Social housing rents to be reduced by 1% each year up to 2020

This came into effect in April 2016 and has been implemented by social landlords

Additionally, in the Autumn Spending Review, it was announced that Housing Benefit for social housing tenants would be capped at Local Housing Allowance rates. This will apply to new tenancies that are created from April 2016 but the new rate will not be take effect until April 2018. The change means that housing benefit for single people under 35 without children will be restricted to shared accommodation rates. This may be expected to increase pressure on social landlords to provide houses in multiple occupation rather than separate housing units.

This is still on schedule. The Department for Work and Pensions are currently consulting on the future of Housing Benefit for residents of supported accommodation. They are due to be affected by the above change, but the rent charged to these residents is considerably more expensive than other types of accommodation. It is currently suggested that Discretionary Housing Payments could be used to cover the shortfall. However, this could create funding issues for housing providers, due to discretionary awards being cash limited.

3. FUTURE WORK ON WELFARE REFORM

The task group has now been in existence for two years and the gradual and phased introduction of the Summer Budget measures mean that it will be some months or even years before their impact can be assessed.

Task groups (which used to be called "task and finish groups") are intended to carry out time-limited pieces of work resulting in recommendations for realistic and clearly defined improvements. In the light of this, it may be that this topic no longer lends itself to being scrutinised by means of a task group review. It may therefore be appropriate to dissolve the task group and instead to maintain overview of the impact of welfare reform at committee level.

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting: 14 July 2016
Subject Matter: Review of Welfare Reform

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

<i>Name of Meeting</i>	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<i>Date of Meeting</i>	14 July 2016
<i>Report Title</i>	Review of Homelessness
<i>Ward Relevance</i>	All
<i>Contact Officer</i>	Paul Ansell, Scrutiny Officer, Tel: (01788) 533591
<i>Summary</i>	Members are asked to agree the one-page strategy for the review of homelessness.
<i>Financial Implications</i>	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
<i>Risk Management Implications</i>	There are no risk management implications arising from this report.
<i>Environmental Implications</i>	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
<i>Legal Implications</i>	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
<i>Equality and Diversity</i>	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

Report to the Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 July 2016

Review of Homelessness

Summary

Members are asked to agree the one-page strategy for the review of homelessness.

1. BACKGROUND

The Chairs and Vice-Chairs placed a task group review of homelessness in the committee's work programme in recognition of the increased level of homelessness, and the implications for those at risk.

2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the review is not to carry out a root and branch review of the Housing Options service but rather to look at whether the council can use its community leadership role to facilitate improvements beyond its routinely provided services. The first part of the review may be to develop an understanding of how much the council does this already and how much is already achieved.

The task group should then narrow its focus to areas where improvements can most realistically be made. For this reason, the "objectives" part of the appended draft one-page strategy has been left open.

3. THE ONE-PAGE STRATEGY

Members are asked to consider the draft one-page strategy.

Following the adoption of the one-page strategy, task group members will be appointed.

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 14 July 2016

Subject Matter: Review of Homelessness

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers.

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS

DRAFT ONE-PAGE STRATEGY

What is the broad topic area?

Homelessness

What is the specific topic area?

Exploration of how the council can help to make an impact in the alleviation of homelessness. A particular concern that has prompted the review is the strain placed on night shelters during winter 2015/16.

What is the ambition of the review?

To reduce the pressure on accommodation for homeless people.

How well does the service perform at the moment?

The use of council's Housing Options Team's drop-in service has increased, resulting in an increase in the number of preventions of homelessness. The Private Sector Leasing scheme provides a cheaper and more satisfactory alternative to B&B, and is expected increase turnover in council housing stock. Members should recognise action that the council is taking but the review is not primarily about scrutinising the performance of existing council services. It is instead concerned with seeking new possibilities for improvements outside the present statutory framework: with the council possibly acting as a facilitator or community leader; but possibly as a direct participant too.

Who shall we consult about the current service and about how we can improve it?

Any organisations or individuals active in the field, together with homeless people past and present, will be potential sources of information. Hope4, Citizens' Advice, the Food Bank, Futures Unlocked, the Homelessness Forum and housing-related support providers would be particularly valuable participants.

What other help do we need?

Those described above plus relevant Housing Options staff.

How long should it take?

Report to committee on 8 December 2016 – though the review participants may be able to facilitate some improvements during the life of the review.

What will be the outcome?

This is hard to define beyond a general statement about making improvements to the management of homeless and prevention of rough sleeping during the winter. It is suggested that, at the end of its first meeting, the task group selects particular areas of focus where it seems that improvements can realistically be made.

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

<i>Name of Meeting</i>	Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<i>Date of Meeting</i>	14 July 2016
<i>Report Title</i>	Committee Work Programme
<i>Ward Relevance</i>	None
<i>Contact Officer</i>	Paul Ansell, Scrutiny Officer, Tel: 01788 533591
<i>Summary</i>	The report updates the committee on the progress of task group reviews and discusses items for future meetings.
<i>Financial Implications</i>	There is a budget of £500 available to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in 2015/16 to spend on the delivery of the overview and scrutiny work programme.
<i>Risk Management Implications</i>	There are no risk management implications arising from this report.
<i>Environmental Implications</i>	There are no environmental implications arising from this report.
<i>Legal Implications</i>	There are no legal implications arising from this report.
<i>Equality and Diversity</i>	No new or existing policy or procedure has been recommended.

Public Report to Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

14 July 2016

Committee Work Programme

Summary

This report updates the committee on the progress of task group reviews and discusses items for future meetings.

1. SCRUTINY REVIEWS PROGRESS

1.1 Welfare Reform

It was reported to the committee in March that this task group would resume its work in the new municipal year and report to this meeting of the committee. A report on the current position and future prospects is a separate item on the agenda.

1.2 Systems Thinking

In the light of the current restructure, this review has been deferred.

2. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairs and Vice-Chairs are meeting shortly to allocate work to the next two cycles of committee meetings. The items to be allocated include outcomes and impact of scrutiny reviews, air quality management and monitoring, ambulance service, alcohol annual review, the town centre and attendance by portfolio holders for general performance review.

2.1 Next meeting of the committee – 13 October

Topic	Description
GP surgery provision	This item is about GP provision in response to population growth. It is important to have attendance at the same meeting by representatives of the CCG, NHS England and Public Health Warwickshire. This was to have been on the 14 July agenda but it has been moved to 13 October because of the unavailability of some participants. This item is likely to be quite time consuming.
Homelessness	Approval of task group membership

2.2 8 December

Topic	Description
Benn Hall	Review of progress in implementation of marketing and business plan

Name of Meeting: Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 14 July 2016

Subject Matter: Committee Work Programme

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers relating to this item.