

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD



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| Report subject             | <b>Work Plan</b>   |
| Meeting date               | 23 March 2026  |
| Status                     | Public Report  |
| Executive summary          | The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Board is asked to consider and identify work priorities for publication in a Work Plan.  |
| <b>Recommendations</b>     | <b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b><br><br><b>the Overview and Scrutiny Board consider and confirm the refreshed Work Plan priorities set out within this report at paragraph 18.</b> |
| Reason for recommendations | The Council's Constitution requires all Overview and Scrutiny Committees to set out proposed work in a Work Plan which will be published with each agenda.                       |
| Portfolio Holder(s):       | N/A – Overview and Scrutiny is a non-executive function  |
| Corporate Director         | Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive  |
| Report Authors             | Lindsay Marshall, Overview and Scrutiny Specialist   |
| Wards                      | Council-wide   |
| Classification             | For Decision   |

## Work Plan updates

1. This report provides the latest version of the Committee's Work Plan at Appendix A and guidance on how to populate and review the Work Plan in line with the Council's Constitution. For the purposes of this report, all references to Overview and Scrutiny Committees shall also apply to the Overview and Scrutiny Board unless otherwise stated.
2. Items added to the Work Plan since the last publication are highlighted as **'NEW'**. Councillors are asked to consider and confirm the latest Work Plan, subject to any updates agreed at the meeting.
3. The most recent [Cabinet Forward Plan](#) can be viewed on the council's website. This link is included in each O&S Work Plan report for councillors to view and refer to

when considering whether any items of pre-decision scrutiny will join the O&S Committee Work Plan.

### **Resources to support O&S Work**

4. The Constitution requires that O&S committees take account of the resources available to support proposals for O&S work. Advice on maximising the resource available to O&S Committees is set out in the O&S Work Planning Guidance document referenced below. Resources available for 2026/27 O&S Board scrutiny are set out in detail at paragraph 16 below.

### **Work programming guidance and tools**

5. The [Overview and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference](#) document provides detail on the principles of scrutiny at BCP Council, the membership, functions and remit of each O&S committee and the variety of working methods available.
6. [The O&S Work Planning Guidance](#) document provides detail on all aspects of work planning including how to determine requests for scrutiny in line with the Council's constitution.
7. The [O&S Framework for scrutiny topic selection](#) was drawn up by O&S councillors in conjunction with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. The framework provides detail on the criteria for proactive, reactive and pre-decision scrutiny topics, and guidance on how these can be selected to contribute to value-added scrutiny outcomes.
8. The '[Request for consideration of an issue by Overview and Scrutiny](#)' form is an example form to be used by councillors and residents when making a new suggestion for a scrutiny topic. Word copies of the form are available from Democratic Services upon request by using the contact details on this agenda.
9. Performance information: progress against the council's Corporate Strategy can be viewed on the council's [Performance Dashboard](#). The dashboard includes ratings to show where the council is on target, areas for monitoring or where action is required, and explanations. The dashboard includes measures relevant to all O&S committees and is provided to assist committees in their horizon scanning and work selection process.
10. The Overview and Scrutiny Board has utilised a structured [Decision Matrix](#) as part of the process for prioritising work plan items. Evaluating suggested topics on the following measures: resident impact, urgency, influence and the value scrutiny could add.

### **Work Programming 2026-27**

#### **Methodology**

11. In early 2026, potential topics for all O&S Committees (including O&S Board) were sourced from a range of stakeholders in a desktop exercise. Topics were received from councillors, officers, Cabinet members and partners of the council. O&S councillors were supported to review these topics in a workshop on 2 February 2026, with a view to determining their priorities for the next municipal year using an evidence-led approach. Councillors evaluated the list of potential topics using a structured matrix assessing resident impact, urgency, influence and the value scrutiny could add.
12. Across breakout groups, councillors scored and discussed each topic, identifying several high-priority areas—including the BCP Local Plan, Planning and Development Management, Regeneration (with an emphasis on major sites such as Carter's Quay and the Winter Gardens), Residents' Parking, and Bournemouth

Town Centre progress. Items which could be dealt with through briefings or with alternative scrutiny methods were also considered.

13. The workshop also generated practical recommendations, such as combining related items, scheduling pre-decision scrutiny where appropriate, briefings before deeper scrutiny, and ensuring flexibility in the future work programme to respond to arising issues.
14. The Board also agreed to update its scrutiny lens to “Resident Impact, Experience and Empowerment,” reinforcing the focus on issues most affecting local communities.
15. Documented workshop outcomes were shared to all Board members after the workshop and can serve as a reference for the Board when considering future scrutiny requests that may arise through the year.

#### **Scrutiny resources available in 2026/27**

16. When considering topic priorities, O&S members assessed these against a good practice approach of allocating 1 hour of scrutiny per topic for sufficient depth and effectiveness of inquiry, and 2/3 hours of scrutiny per committee. On this basis, **the illustrative resource capacity for the O&S Board for 2026/27 is:**

- 12 hours - pre-decision (scrutiny of Cabinet reports)
- 15 hours – proactive scrutiny (topics requested by O&S)
- 4 hours – reactive scrutiny topics (those that are unplanned and urgent)
- 4 hours – briefings (information giving sessions between meetings)

#### **PLUS**

- Approximately 1 working group (priority order of all working groups to be determined by O&S Chairs / Vice Chairs group)
- Unlimited rapporteurs (member-led independent work)
- Unlimited info only reports

#### **Shortlisted Topics for 2026/27**

17. Following the workshop the Chair and Vice-Chair worked with officers to evaluate workshop outcomes against 2026/27 resource capacity. Taken into consideration was the overall scoring matrix, ‘burning’ topics raised by individual councillors, and those items where one or more groups did not feel scrutiny could add value. The topic suggestion of Licensing is not included in the following table but the Chair agreed to look into this further to ascertain if it would add further value and a decision on this would be made once this work is undertaken.
18. The below table of topic priorities is suggested by the Chair and Vice Chair for Board consideration and approval. Many of the topics included in the work programme require further guidance from lead officers on suitable timing and so scrutiny ‘slots’ have been reserved for these with dates tbc. The attached work plan document is in draft to reflect this and will be developed further as information is gathered from officers. **The Board is asked to consider the below table and confirm its scrutiny priorities for 2026/27:**

| Topic  | Scrutiny slots allocated (approx. 1 hour per slot and max. 3 slots per Board meeting) |           |          |                           |   |
|--|---|-----------|----------|---------------------------|---|
|  | Pre-decision (Cabinet reports) & statutory Scrutiny                                   | Proactive | Reactive | Briefing/info only report | Notes   |
| Finance scrutiny   | 5   |           |          |                           | Includes annual budget scrutiny   |
| Regeneration/Growth Plan                                 |   | 3         |          |                           | Initial item on draft Growth Plan, May 2026   |
| Local Plan   | 1   | 2         |          |                           | May 2026 Cabinet report initially, further scheduling tbc                                 |
| Estates / Asset Transfer                                 |   | 2         |          |                           |   |
| Recommendation Tracking                                  |   | 2         |          |                           |   |
| Bournemouth Town Centre Progress – Citizens Panel & HSRA |   | 1.5       |          |                           | June 2026   |
| Planning Performance / Development Management            |   | 1         |          |                           |   |
| Complaints Process & Member Involvement                  |   | 1         |          |                           | plus rapporteur work  |
| Town & Parish Council - Relationship with BCP            |   | 1         |          |                           |   |
| Local Safeguarding Partnership                           | 1   |           |          |                           | statutory annual item   |
| Devolution   |   |           | 1        |                           | As required   |
| Licensing  |   | 1         |          |                           | Inclusion of topic is tbc, subject to further advice to determine potential to add value. |
| Community Safety / Domestic Abuse Strategy               | 1   |           |          |                           |   |
| Social Value Statement                                   | 1   |           |          |                           |   |
| Car Parking Strategy                                     | 1   |           |          |                           |   |
| Residents Parking  |   | 1         |          | 1                         | Briefing to precede working group on this topic   |

|   |                                |                            |                          |                          |   |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Voluntary Sector / BIDs / Partnership Working |                                |                            |                          | 1                        |   |
| Council Operating Model                       |                                |                            |                          | 1                        |   |
| Homes England                                 |                                |                            |                          | 1                        |   |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                                 |                                |                            |                          |                          |   |
| <b>AVAILABLE CAPACITY</b>                     | <b>13 pre -decision topics</b> | <b>14 proactive topics</b> | <b>4 reactive topics</b> | <b>4 briefing topics</b> | <b>PLUS WORKING GROUP/S</b>   |
| <b>ALLOCATED CAPACITY</b>                     | 9                              | 15.5                       | 1                        | 4                        | 1 WORKING GROUP   |
| <b>REMAINING CAPACITY</b>                     | 2 slots                        | 1 slot                     | 3 slots                  | 0 slots                  | Review priorities if capacity is exceeded and swap topics as required |

### Next Steps and In Year Scrutiny Requests

19. Following confirmation of the Board's priorities, officers will gather the remaining timescale information required to plot proactive topics.
20. Pre-decision topics can be identified and confirmed by the Board on a monthly basis when the Cabinet Forward Plan is refreshed.
21. Working group suggestions will be passed to the O&S Chairs and Vice Chairs Group for consideration. The Group will agree the order of progression for working groups, in line with Constitution requirements which allow for one working group to be progressed at a time across the whole O&S function.
22. Key Lines of Enquiry documents will be progressed for individual scrutiny topics . Advice on scoping will be sought from officers to strengthen inquiries (in line with usual practice) and from the O&S Chairs and Vice Chairs Group (to provide additional test and challenge, in line with updated Constitution requirements).
23. In year topic requests: notwithstanding the Board's planning of its annual programme of work, councillors retain the right to suggest scrutiny topics throughout the year. Requests for scrutiny work may also be made by residents and other council bodies, such as full Council, at any time. For arising 'in year' requests, the Board is recommended to make use of the matrix tool to assess the topics in an evidence-led way. Where scrutiny capacity is reached, the Board can weigh up the value of swapping scrutiny topics for others by referring to the body of evidence generated through the annual work planning workshop.

### Options Appraisal

24. The Board is asked to consider and confirm the scrutiny priorities as outlined at paragraph 18 above, and provide any further guidance on approach to scrutiny that it sees fit at this time.
25. To ensure that work can be accommodated within available resources, the total number of scrutiny slots available should not be exceeded. If priorities as outlined are not agreed by the Board, topics should be swapped to remain within capacity.

26. Updating the Work Plan at this time will ensure clear direction for progression of reports in a timely way. If updates are not confirmed there may be an impact on report timings and other scrutiny activity.

### **Summary of financial implications**

27. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **Summary of legal implications**

28. There are no legal implications arising from this report. The Council's Constitution requires that all O&S bodies set out proposed work in a Work Plan which will be published with each agenda. The recommendation proposed in this report will fulfil this requirement.

### **Summary of human resources implications**

29. There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

30. There are no sustainability resources implications arising from this report.

### **Summary of public health implications**

31. There are no public health implications arising from this report.

### **Summary of equality implications**

32. There are no equality implications arising from this report. Any councillor and any member of the public may make suggestions for overview and scrutiny work. Further detail on this process is included within O&S Procedure Rules at Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

33. There is a risk of challenge to the Council if the Constitutional requirement to establish and publish a Work Plan is not met.

### **Background papers**

- [Overview and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference](#)
- [O&S Work Planning Guidance document](#)
- [O&S Framework for scrutiny topic selection](#)
- ['Request for consideration of an issue by Overview and Scrutiny'](#)
- [Performance Dashboard](#)
- [Decision Matrix](#)

Further detail on these background papers is contained within the body of this report.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A - Current O&S Work Plan