

- 65.1 Attention was drawn to the Executive Committee Forward Plan, circulated at Pages No. 15-18. Members were asked to determine whether there were any questions for the relevant Lead Members and what support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could give to the work contained within the Plan.
- 65.2 A Member noted that some of the Agenda looked very light; this was an issue which had been raised by the Committee on several occasions. In response, the Chief Executive explained that there were fluctuations with all Committee Agenda; however, he recognised that they needed to be planned as far as possible, particularly from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's point of view in terms of keeping abreast of forthcoming items to be considered by the Executive Committee and the support which it may be able to offer. He had recently sent a reminder to Officers to ensure that items were placed on the Forward Plan in a timely manner and he provided assurance that this was something he would be monitoring.
- 65.3 With regard to the confidential item in respect of the transfer of sports facilities at Cold Pool Lane, due to be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 26 April 2017, a Member questioned whether this could be agreed before the new financial year. The Chief Executive explained that the transfer of facilities was a long process and there were a series of actions still to be taken, including identifying the sports clubs which may be likely to take on the facilities, therefore 26 April was the earliest that this item was likely to come forward. He clarified that it was not essential for this matter to be resolved within the current financial year.

65.4 It was

RESOLVED That the Executive Committee Forward Plan be **NOTED**.

OS.66 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

- 66.1 Attention was drawn to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, 2016/17, circulated at Pages No. 19-22, which Members were asked to consider.
- 66.2 The Head of Corporate Services explained that an update on the Community Safety Partnership had been removed from the Agenda for the present meeting as it had been suspended pending a countywide review of Community Safety Partnerships. This work had now been completed and a report would be brought to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 February 2017. Members were also informed that the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy Review Working Group had not yet concluded its findings and a report would not be ready to bring to the next meeting of the Committee. As such, this item would now be brought to the meeting on 21 March 2017. A Member raised concern that this review had been ongoing for some time and he questioned whether the new deadline was achievable. In response, Members were advised that the Officers involved had provided assurance that the work would be concluded in time for the March meeting.
- 66.3 It was noted that David Steels had now left his post as Environmental Health Manager and the Work Programme would need to be updated to reflect that. The Chief Executive indicated that Tewkesbury Borough Council had entered into an arrangement with Cheltenham Borough Council through which their Environmental Health Manager, Yvonne Hope, would run the Environmental Health and Licensing services whilst the potential for further collaboration with Cheltenham Borough Council was explored in respect of those services. In response to a Member query, he advised that Yvonne would be working four days per week and she was already in post. As part of the same arrangement, Cheltenham Borough Council was providing extra support within the Licensing team. Alastair Low from the Environmental Health team had also picked up some additional work including taking on the role of District Emergency Planning Liaison Officer (DEPLO) where he was supported by Adrian Goode as Deputy DEPLO. The new Head of Community

Services, Peter Tonge, would be joining the team at the end of the month at which time Richard Kirk, the Interim Head of Service, would leave the authority.

66.4 Having considered the information provided, it was

RESOLVED That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2016/17 be **NOTED**.

OS.67 GLOUCESTERSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PRESENTATION

67.1 The Chair introduced Steve Maginn, Local Risk Manager from the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service, and indicated that he would be giving a presentation about the impact of fire prevention and protection.

67.2 Members were advised that, when Stewart Edgar had been appointed as the Chief Fire Officer and Operations Director in 2014, he had a clear remit in terms of making efficiency savings and a new service delivery model had been introduced as a result. At the time there had been 33 pumping appliances across 22 stations with a budget of £18.25M and it had been necessary to reduce that by £3.4M. This had resulted in an unparalleled strategic review of all aspects of service delivery and support with the main outcomes being the reduction in demand on response and the creation of capacity to implement a greater prevention strategy. Prevention and protection was now at the heart of all of the work carried out by the Fire and Rescue Service. The catalyst for change was a piece of work carried out by Severn Park Fire and Rescue Service in the south-west which had looked at a range of 100 fires and highlighted seven 'at risk' groups within communities. Once these groups had been established, links had been made with the Police, health services and other agencies to identify where those people were located. Historically the Fire Service had undertaken a lot of home safety visits and, given that people felt comfortable with allowing Fire Officers into their homes, this had evolved from offering basic fundamental fire safety advice to 'Safe and Well' checks and had helped to identify vulnerable people. It was now possible to map where the most vulnerable groups were located and to plan resources and develop the prevention strategy accordingly.

67.3 As part of the Safe and Well visits, a pilot scheme had been run with Public Health England regarding winter-related illnesses. The scheme had involved five stations over a three month period during winter 2015/16 and 6,304 visits had been conducted during that time. It had been targeted at the over 65's and had focused on four main contributors to winter-related illness including the prevention of falls; the prevention of cold homes; the prevention of social isolation; and ensuring that people received flu immunisation. The project had included tackling the underlying causes of fire, fire fatalities and injuries whilst also improving the health and wellbeing of vulnerable adults. Through the scheme, the Fire and Rescue Service had been able to signpost the most vulnerable people in the community and look at safeguarding. It was hoped that the success of the scheme could be repeated this year with the addition of eye sight checks; this was one of the biggest issues with people aged over 65 and could cause problems in an emergency e.g. being able to get out of a property quickly.

67.4 With regard to telecare, the remote monitoring of an individual's condition or lifestyle, Members were informed that, under the previous system operated by Gloucestershire County Council, assessments could only be carried out if a family member could respond on that person's behalf. There was now an opportunity for

the Fire Service to act as a responder and this had opened up the scheme to more people. Fire Officers were also involved with cardiac care on behalf of the ambulance service and acted as the First Person on Scene (FPOS) where access could not be gained; this had previously been carried out by the Police on behalf of the ambulance service. Members were advised that the telecare pilot, run from mid-June to mid-September 2016 in the North Cotswolds, had enabled 28 people to return home or remain in their own homes where the alternative would have either been a short or long term placement in a care home. If calculated for the full year, the savings across the pilot areas would have been £482,956 and, if applied across the county's six districts, would result in savings of £2.92M per year.

- 67.5 Members were advised that the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service had worked closely with Prior's Park Neighbourhood Project on a successful scheme during the course of 2016 which had yielded a lot of results in terms of vulnerability in that area. The new Police Inspector, Cheryl Godwin, was keen to launch the Aston Project - a scheme aiming to work with young people aged 9-17 by identifying their interests and engaging them in constructive activity which they built credits towards a reward activity through timebanking - within Tewkesbury Borough and Prior's Park would be the pilot area. The new Watch Manager in charge of the Fire Station in Tewkesbury, Michele Hick, was very driven in terms of prevention and youth involvement and one of her tasks was to develop a cadet force for the Tewkesbury area which would be run by the Fire Service; there had been great success with this scheme in Cinderford.
- 67.6 One of the biggest successes in terms of driving down response was the reduction in the number of false alarms caused by automatic fire detection apparatus in commercial properties; this had reduced by 82% since 2011 which was the biggest reduction in the whole country. This had created a massive capacity and generated huge financial savings. It was clear that the main challenges for the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service over the next three years would be finding a further £2.2M savings from the budget, thus making it the first £13M Fire and Rescue Service in the country; the intended reforms which had been set out by Teresa May whilst in her role as Home Secretary; and a potential bid from the Police and Crime Commissioner and the associated impacts on governance. Reducing the budget further would be a significant challenge and, whilst staff had been protected up until this point, it may now be necessary to consider new delivery models.
- 67.7 A Member was very impressed with the idea of a cadet force within Tewkesbury as he felt that this could offer discipline and guidance to young people. It could also help to prevent anti-social behaviour and he referred to several incidents of arson in Brockworth by way of example. He questioned how this would be paid for, given the need to make further budget cuts, and was advised that the Fire and Rescue Service could not afford to fund the project; however, it could offer support in terms of management, facilities and training. The Fire and Rescue Service relied heavily on volunteers and it was hoped that, with the guidance of the new Watch Manager at Tewkesbury who was leading the project, there would be at least five new recruits who would be ready to get involved in that type of activity with further support from parents. A lot of Fire Services were now running apprenticeships which bridged the gap between the cadet force and becoming a firefighter. There was a definite link with a reduction in anti-social behaviour and if a successful cadet force could be developed within Tewkesbury, it could be rolled out to Gloucester, which included the Brockworth area the Member had referred to.
- 67.8 In response to a query regarding Winchcome Fire Station and whether it was aligned to any other stations, Members were advised that this was a retained station as opposed to a voluntary station – there were no voluntary stations within Gloucestershire. It was intended to provide a managerial support group for North

Cotswold, which would include retained firefighters, in order to link stations together as some Officers had a lot of experience which others could learn from. He pointed out that there was a particularly good relationship with the whole-time station at Uckington where there were four full-time Watch Managers so there were already links in place for retained stations such as Winchcombe. Another Member questioned whether any difficulty had been experienced obtaining information about vulnerable members of the community. He was informed that this was generally not a problem; third sector agencies could be reluctant to share information but this had not proven to be obstructive. Firefighters liked to know the outcomes and results of interventions but this was not always possible due to confidentiality. As such, consideration was being given to using reference numbers for jobs so they could be quoted without disclosing any sensitive information.

67.9 A Member sought an explanation as to how the 82% reduction in the number of false alarms caused by automatic fire detection apparatus in commercial properties had been achieved. Members were advised that consideration had been given to the profile of such cases, the percentage that had turned out to be real fires and whether anything could have been done to prevent them in procedural terms. It had been concluded that it was the responsibility of the business to ensure that alarms were investigated and that the Fire and Rescue Service was only called out to deal with real fires. It had been found that companies often enlisted call centres as a third party to deal with the alarms and they had tended to automatically put these through to the Fire and Rescue Service for investigation. The stance had therefore been changed and letters had been sent to thousands of organisations to outline their responsibility; there would be a full response to genuine fires but any false alarms would be challenged. The percentage reduction was an indication of just how big the problem had been and how simple it was to overcome. A Member indicated that business premises in America were charged for false alarms and she was advised that there was a 'three strikes and out' system in place here. As a lot of the false alarms were due to misplaced equipment or changes to processes it was considered to be more beneficial to give businesses the benefit of the doubt initially and work with them to address the problems; however, they were aware that they would be fined if the problem persisted.

67.10 The Chair thanked the Local Risk Manager for his informative presentation and indicated that the additional confidential information which had been provided in respect of the outcomes of the interventions to reduce the risk of harm to vulnerable groups from winter-related illnesses, along with a case study setting out how one particular member of the community had been assisted by the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service, would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED That the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service presentation be **NOTED**.

OS.68 HOUSING STRATEGY REVIEW REPORT

68.1 Attention was drawn to the report of the Housing Strategy Review Working Group, circulated at Pages No. 23-213. Members were asked to consider the achievements to date in respect of the outcomes identified in the Housing,

Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 Action Plan; to endorse the Housing Strategy 2017-21 and the first year action plan and recommend to Council that it be adopted with effect from 1 January 2017; and to endorse the arrangements in respect of future action plans arising from the strategy and monitoring as set out at Paragraph 4 of the report. Members noted that there was an error in the final recommendation which should refer to Paragraph 5 of the report.

- 68.2 The Chair of the Housing Strategy Review Working Group, and Lead Member for Built Environment, indicated that he was happy to present the 2015/16 achievements of the Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 and to draw that strategy to a close whilst presenting the Committee with a new five year Housing Strategy for 2017-21. He explained that the Housing Advice team continued to provide advice and assistance via a drop-in service at the Public Services Centre to over 1,000 customers annually; in 2015/16 1,360 households had received support. It was noted that the number of residents seeking advice had doubled since 2010. The number of residents approaching the Council with serious housing difficulty, who were in need of in-depth assistance, had risen by 24% during the lifetime of the previous strategy to 229 households in the last financial year, which was in line with national homeless trends. A renewed emphasis on homeless prevention during the lifetime of the strategy had resulted in a slight reduction in homeless applications. On average, 120 households approached the Council as homeless each year, of which about half were accepted as homeless; although the figures did vary year on year. The last financial year had seen a slight drop in the number of homelessness approaches but the figure year on year was relatively stable. Of those approaches, the numbers accepted had slightly reduced but, similarly, remained stable. Homelessness prevention figures had seen a significant increase in the last financial year to 172; on average the preventions had been at around 105 per year. In the current financial year (April to December 2016), the number of preventions stood at 87 households. Members were advised that the Housing Advice team focused on preventative services rather than dealing with customers in crisis having already reached a state of homelessness. Officers sought to assist customers early and positively through landlord negotiations, family mediation or supporting them to find alternative accommodation, including access to private rented housing where appropriate. The Anti-Social Behaviour Youth Diversion Worker had an essential role in homelessness prevention and worked with housing services, housing providers/landlords and the Police in order to prevent evictions where the household was likely to become homeless due to anti-social behaviour. The countywide Sanctuary Scheme for households experiencing domestic violence had been remarkably successful. Since the inception of the scheme in 2014, 31 households had been able to remain in their homes to date through target hardening measures such as lock changes, security lighting and panic alarms. In addition, temporary housing had been sourced for households fleeing domestic violence in the Borough through a joint project with other local authorities in Gloucestershire.

- 68.3 Members were advised that the Council had five properties within the Borough which were let on licence agreements to provide emergency accommodation. These had been invaluable in enabling most of the families needing emergency accommodation to remain within the borough, however, there continued to be a heavy reliance on bed and breakfast in other areas for single households and

couples. Much work continued to secure further temporary accommodation in the borough for those groups working with social housing providers. During the lifetime of the Housing Strategy 2012-16, 668 additional affordable homes had been built across the Borough. It was currently estimated that a further 197 affordable homes would be built in the current financial year, which continued to exceed the Council Plan target of 150 affordable homes per annum. In 2015/16, 139 new homes were built for rent and available through housing associations. In the same period there were a total of 409 lets across the borough in housing association properties meaning that 34% of lets came from new-build affordable rented homes. Affordability of housing was impacting on many residents, for example, large families on benefits affected by the benefit cap would be unable to afford to rent a home in the borough, even at social rented levels, unless they could secure employment or increase the number of hours they currently worked. Single people under 35 and young people aged 18-21 who were on benefits would also find all rented accommodation unaffordable unless they secured employment. Officers were working with the Revenues and Benefits team, housing providers, job centres and the Citizens' Advice Bureau to prevent residents from losing their homes and to secure more 'skills for life' training. The Environmental Health team continued to respond accordingly to requests for support from private rented tenants and private landlords regarding housing conditions, including the 'Safe at Home' and 'Warm and Well' schemes. On average, eight Category 1 hazards were removed per year as a result of interventions from Officers.

- 68.4 The Housing Strategy 2017-21, attached at Appendix 2 to the report, included a statutory requirement for a Homelessness Strategy and a Tenancy Strategy which could be found at Appendices 2 and 3 of the Strategy respectively. The five year strategy played a key part in delivering the Council Plan which identified housing as a priority. The strategy had been brought together by Officers and an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group where Members had been presented with the housing and homelessness evidence needed to inform them of the whole picture of needs and challenges for the borough. The Working Group had agreed priorities and objectives for public and stakeholder consultation which had run for a six week period. The consultation had identified many areas of concern and gaps in the original evidence base which had been addressed in the document before the Committee. The strategy was an overarching document which took into account the principal national and local issues that were likely to affect Tewkesbury Borough in the foreseeable future. It set out the housing challenges and explained how it was intended to address the issues through four key priorities: increasing housing supply; homelessness and homelessness prevention; meeting the needs of specific groups; and improving the health and wellbeing of local people. The key objectives were detailed within each of the priority areas and were set out at Page No. 80 of the report. Targets and outcomes for delivering the objectives would be included in an annual action plan. An action plan for the first year had been agreed by the Working Group and was set out at Page No. 82 of the report. It was proposed that this be updated annually to allow the Council to be proactive, as well as reactive, to the changing needs of the community and to respond when new government policies were implemented. The action plan would be as flexible as possible so that new actions could be started as and when appropriate over the five year period. Action Plans would be taken to the Executive Committee for approval with bi-annual monitoring reports taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.
- 68.5 Several Members of the Housing Strategy Review Working Group took the opportunity to congratulate Officers for the amount of work that had gone into the review, particularly given the short timescale for completion, the complexities associated with housing and the amount of work required to be undertaken by such a small team. With reference to that, a Member sought assurance that the

first year action plan was realistic and the Housing Services Manager confirmed that Officers were confident they could be achieved, particularly considering the amount of work that had been done over the last couple of years and the focus of the team. The Chief Executive agreed that the targets were challenging but pointed out that the actions would be delivered in connection with a range of partners. The Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing praised the Housing Services team for its achievements in recent years, particularly given the stressful and often undesirable circumstances in which Officers had to work, and indicated that he had every confidence that they would succeed in delivering the action plan.

68.6 A Member drew attention to Page No. 35 of the report and questioned how many empty homes had been brought back into use. The Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer advised that the figures in relation to long-term empty properties were set out at Page No. 163 of the report and covered the period 2011/12 to 2016/17. With regard to the previous strategy, a Member noted that one of the measures to achieve the objective 'to provide social housing for those most in need' was to 'continue to implement the Gloucestershire Homeseeker allocations procedure' with the outcome of 'ensuring all households in emergency bands are house appropriately within a reasonable timescale' and she sought clarification as to what was meant by a 'reasonable timescale'. The Housing Services Manager explained that emergency banding was a misleading term as it included anyone downsizing within that band, which was an emergency for Officers as opposed to the customer; however, it also included people who were in a true emergency situation and required accommodation immediately e.g. where a property was subject to a Prohibition Order (where there was a serious threat to health and safety of occupants) or a person returning from hospital required specialist accommodation. Officers generally resolved these issues within two months. With regard to Page No. 84 of the report, a Member sought further explanation as to what was meant by 'stop the use of private bed and breakfast for emergency accommodation except in emergencies' as stated in relation to Priority 2, Action 8. In response, the Housing Services Manager advised that, whilst a certain amount of homelessness cases could be anticipated, there would always be unforeseen incidents, for instance, people being made homeless as a result of flooding, which may require emergency accommodation, such as bed and breakfasts, and the action intended to ensure that type of accommodation was only used for such purposes. A Member went on to draw attention to Page No. 127 and he questioned what was meant by 'bashes' in the Department of Communities and Local Government definition of rough sleeping set out at Paragraph 4.1. The Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer explained that bashes were temporary structures made by rough sleepers to protect themselves against the elements and she undertook to insert an explanatory note to this effect.

68.7 The Deputy Chief Executive felt that the Housing Strategy was successfully summarised in the diagram at Page No. 63 of the report; it fitted with a number of other key strategic documents both at a borough and countywide level and he felt that there was interaction between the various different elements. He reiterated the importance of flexibility given the uncertainty in terms of future legislation and he felt that this had been achieved within the draft strategy for 2017-21. Having considered the information provided, and views expressed, it was

RESOLVED

1. That the achievements made to date in respect of the outcomes identified in the Housing, Renewal and Homelessness Strategy 2012-16 Action Plan, as set out at Appendix 1 of the report, be **NOTED**.

2. That the Housing Strategy 2017-21 and first year action plan be endorsed, as set out at Appendix 2 of the report, and that it be **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that it be **ADOPTED** with effect from 1 January 2017.
3. That the arrangements in respect of future action plans arising from the strategy and monitoring be **ENDORSED**, as set out at Paragraph 5 of the report.

OS.69 REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 69.1 The report of the Head of Corporate Services, circulated at Pages No. 214-229, set out the findings of an assessment of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's effectiveness. Members were asked to approve the recommendations identified at Paragraph 2.5 of the report.
- 69.2 The Head of Corporate Services explained that the Corporate Peer Challenge, completed in November 2014, had recognised how the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made an important contribution and had made recommendations to maximise its value and increase effectiveness. Work had subsequently been undertaken by the Committee both in 2015 and in 2016, when the membership of the Committee had changed following Borough Council elections, to obtain Members' views and ideas. At the workshop held on 9 February 2016, Members had agreed to be critiqued by an independent assessor and Ann Reeder from Frontline Consulting had observed the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 14 June 2016. Initial observations had been fed back to the Committee directly following the meeting and the formal report was attached at Appendix 1 of the Committee report.
- 69.3 The Head of Corporate Services had summarised the main findings within Paragraph 2.0 of the Committee report. Ann had highlighted numerous examples of good practice including the publication of the annual Overview and Scrutiny Committee report; commitment of the Committee and robust Chairmanship; strong Officer support; relevant and significant issues being included within the Work Programme; and the Committee's understanding of 'what mattered' e.g. policy development and issues relating to the Borough. Another area where the Committee really added value was when undertaking reviews in Working Group mode, for instance, the reviews of car parking, public participation at Planning Committee, the Housing Strategy and the emerging Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. The report recommendations were very detailed and there were several statements of fact about what was already taking place. For example, it was suggested that the Committee focus on RAG (Red, Amber, Green) ratings and direction of travel indicators – these were used within the performance tracker; the report had pointed out that Members could be reminded that they could make suggestions for the Agenda – Members were already aware that they could input into the Committee Work Programme as and when they felt appropriate; and, it was stated that the pre-meeting could usefully help the Committee as a whole to identify the overall areas for focus – the Head of Corporate Services tried to do this in the pre-briefings which were held immediately prior to the Committee meetings.
- 69.4 Following discussion between Officers, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee and the Lead Member, it was felt that some of the recommendations would add no value to the effectiveness of the Committee and, in some cases the benefits would be disproportionate to the resources available to effectively implement the recommendation, for instance, Members sharing out responsibility for specific areas of performance; conducting preparation for pre-briefings via email in advance; and the introduction of a Select Committee style seating arrangement.

Three key recommendations had been identified which it was believed would add value to the effectiveness of the Committee and they were set out at Paragraph 2.5 of the report. In terms of the identification of key partners who contributed to the delivery of the Council's priorities and programming their attendance at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it was felt that it would be more beneficial to focus on partners who would help to deliver the Council Plan rather than choosing them more randomly due to an interest in a particular area. It was also agreed that a consistent approach across all monitoring reports would be advantageous and Officers would ensure that future reports included a RAG rating or direction of travel indicators in a similar way to the performance tracker. Finally, it was accepted that ongoing training and development, particularly in respect of effective questioning and the relationship between the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees, was necessary and the Heads of Corporate Services and Democratic Services would work on a training and development programme to increase effectiveness. In addition, attention was drawn to Paragraph 2.6 of the Officer report which explained that, at the time the observation exercise had been undertaken, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had still been receiving financial information as part of the quarterly performance management report, which was no longer the case as the financial information was now reported directly to the Executive Committee only. Members may wish to consider whether this was an appropriate arrangement or whether the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should continue to have an input into the Council's financial position.

69.5 With regard to the updates from the Council's representatives on the Gloucestershire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel, a Member suggested that the updates could be circulated in advance of the meeting and another Member agreed this was a good idea. However, several Members were of the opinion that it was helpful to hear the reports from the representatives at the meeting and that scrutiny of those bodies would be less effective without a verbal presentation. It was subsequently agreed that the reporting arrangements for these updates remain unchanged. A Member went on to express the view that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive financial information and Members were advised that this could easily be reincorporated into the quarterly performance management report. The Chief Executive's view was that, if receiving this information helped more Members to understand the Council's financial position, this could only be beneficial in terms of making decisions at Council. A Member queried whether this would impact upon Officer time and he was advised that the information was produced for the Executive Committee anyway and the Head of Finance and Asset Management already attended Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings where performance management was being reported so there would be no additional impact.

69.6 The Lead Member for Organisational Development explained that she was in a difficult position as both a Member of the Executive Committee and Portfolio Holder for Scrutiny. One of the objectives of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was to challenge Lead Members and she found it frustrating that this did not seem to happen. She pointed out that the Lead Member for Built Environment had presented an item earlier on the Agenda but this had been prepared by Officers and no questions had been directed to him by other Members. Another Member indicated that he frequently raised concern that Lead Members did not provide enough feedback to other Members. The Chief Executive reminded Members that Tewkesbury Borough Council was a fourth option authority and Committee reports were produced by Officers rather than Members as they would in a Cabinet arrangement. The Lead Member for Built Environment had presented the report on the Housing Strategy and, given the significance of the document and the complexity of the topic, it was not unreasonable that Officers had assisted with its preparation. He pointed out that it was down to the Overview and Scrutiny

Committee to follow-up with questions if they felt that the information provided needed to be challenged. Members were advised that Lead Members regularly presented to Council so that all Members were kept abreast of what was happening within their Portfolios. The Head of Democratic Services agreed that scrutiny in a fourth option authority was much more difficult than in a cabinet arrangement with single party control. Whilst there was a role for scrutiny, this was much less clear cut and, as a result, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had tended to play a greater role in other elements such as policy development - a huge area of success for the Committee. She explained that Lead Members could be invited to attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings; however, this should be on the basis of them being challenged on particular issues and not simply to provide information. She also highlighted occasions in the past when Lead Members had attended the Committee to answer questions on matters of concern to Members such as recycling. Tewkesbury Borough Council strived for partnership working between the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees and it was important that the two Committees did not become confrontational as that could be detrimental to the business of the Council and how it operated. She accepted more training was needed around the nature of the relationship between the Committees and that would be arranged in due course.

69.7 A Member felt that one of the main problems was a lack of understanding among Members as to what was covered within each of the Lead Member Portfolios. On that basis, he suggested that the performance tracker could be updated to include the name of the Lead Member responsible for each action and it was agreed that would be implemented for the next quarterly report. The Chief Executive advised that Members had all previously been issued with a list of the Portfolios and this could be recirculated following the meeting. He clarified that it was down to the individual Lead Members as to how they chose to run their Portfolio.

69.8 Having considered the report, and the views expressed, it was

- RESOLVED**
1. That the report on the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be **NOTED** and the recommendations identified in Paragraph 2.5 be **APPROVED**.
 2. That financial information be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the quarterly performance management report.
 3. That the performance tracker be updated to include the names of the Lead Members responsible for each action.

The meeting closed at 6:18 pm