OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2007
7.30 PM

COMMITTEE AGENDA

COMMITTEE ROOM 6
HARROW CIVIC CENTRE

Please note the venue for the meeting.

MEMBERSHIP   (Quorum 4)

Chairman: **Councillor Stanley Sheinwald**

Councillors:

Don Billson	**Mrs Margaret Davine**
Mrs Janet Cowan	**B E Gate**
Mrs Myra Michael	**Mitzi Green (VC)**
Anthony Seymour	**Jerry Miles**
Dinesh Solanki	
Yogesh Teli	
Mark Versallion	

Representatives of Voluntary Aided Sector: Mrs J Rammelt/Reverend P Reece
Representatives of Parent Governors: Mrs Despo Speel/Mr Ramji Chauhan

Reserve Members:

1. Robert Benson	1. Bill Stephenson
2. Ashok Kulkarni	2. Phillip O'Dell
3. Manji Kara	3. Navin Shah
4. Mrs Kinnear	4. Mrs Rekha Shah
5. Barry Macleod-Cullinane	
6. Mrs Lurline Champagnie	
7. Mrs Vina Mithani	
8. Jeremy Zeid	

**Issued by the Democratic Services Section,
Legal and Governance Services Department**

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HARROW COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2007

AGENDA - PART I

1. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**
   To note the attendance at this meeting of any duly appointed Reserve Members.

   Reserve Members may attend meetings:-

   (i)   to take the place of an ordinary Member for whom they are a reserve;
   (ii)   where the ordinary Member will be absent for the <u>whole</u> of the meeting; and
   (iii)   the meeting notes at the start of the meeting at the item 'Reserves' that the Reserve Member is or will be attending as a reserve;
   (iv)   if a Reserve Member whose intention to attend has been noted arrives after the commencement of the meeting, then that Reserve Member can only act as a Member from the start of the next item of business on the agenda after his/her arrival.

2. **Declarations of Interest:**
   To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, arising from business to be transacted at this meeting, from:

   (a)   all Members of the Committee, Sub Committee, Panel or Forum;
   (b)   all other Members present in any part of the room or chamber.

3. **Arrangement of Agenda:**
   To consider whether any of the items listed on the agenda should be considered with the press and public excluded on the grounds that it is thought likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that there would be disclosure of confidential information in breach of an obligation of confidence or of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

4. **Minutes:**

   (a)   <u>Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee:</u>   (Pages 1 - 32)
          That the minutes be taken as read and signed as a correct record:

          (i)   the Ordinary meeting held on 24 April 2007;
          (ii)   the Special meeting held on 14 May 2007;
          (iii)   the Special meeting held on 12 June 2007;
          (iv)   the Ordinary meeting held on 10 July 2007;
          (v)   the Special meeting held on 12 July 2007.

(b)   Minutes of former Scrutiny Sub-Committees:
That the minutes of the following meetings be taken as read and signed as a correct record:

(i)   Adult Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee meetings held on 20 March 2007 and 18 April 2007;
(ii)   Safer and Stronger Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting held on 23 January 2007;
(iii) Children and Young People Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting held on 17 April 2007;
(iv)   Sustainable Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Sub-Committee meetings held on 28 March 2007 and 13 June 2007.

[Note: The minutes are published on the Council's intranet and website.]

5.   **Public Questions:**
To receive questions (if any) from local residents/organisations under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.

6.   **Petitions:**
To receive petitions (if any) submitted by members of the public/Councillors under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 9.

7.   **Deputations:**
To receive deputations (if any) under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

8.   **References from Council/Cabinet:**
(if any).

9.   **Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:** (Pages 33 - 34)

10.   **Membership - Performance and Finance Scrutiny Sub-Committee:** (Pages 35 - 36)
To agree the revised membership.

11.   **Appointment of Advisers to the Committee:** (Pages 37 - 40)
Report of the Director of Legal and Governance Services.

12.   **Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital (RNOH) - Summary of application to become an NHS Foundation Trust:** (Pages 41 - 42)
Paper submitted by the RNOH.

[There will be a presentation from the RNOH on this item].

13.   **Developing the Scrutiny Work Programme:** (Pages 43 - 56)
Report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy.

14. **Reconfiguring Scrutiny – An Update:** (Pages 57 - 74)
Report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy.

15. **Evidence for Accountability Project:** (Pages 75 - 84)
Report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy.

16. **Any Other Business:**
Which the Chairman has decided is urgent and cannot otherwise be dealt with.

17. **Dates of Future Meetings:**

2007 (7.30 pm start time)	**2008 (7.30 pm start time)**
6 September (Ordinary)	28 January (Ordinary + Education)
25 September (Health)	12 February (Ordinary + Health)
9 October (Ordinary + Education)	31 March (Health)
30 October (Ordinary)	22 April (Ordinary + annual
13 November (Ordinary) *	Partnership matters)
20 November (Ordinary + Education)	
11 December (Q&A) *	

[* The themes for these meetings have been swapped round].

AGENDA - PART II - NIL

REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD ON 24 APRIL 2007

Chairman: * Councillor Jean Lammiman

Councillors: * B E Gate   * Anthony Seymour
              * Mitzi Green   * Mrs Rekha Shah
              * Salim Miah   * Stanley Sheinwald
              * Jerry Miles   * Dinesh Solanki (1)
              * Christopher Noyce   * Mark Versallion

*   Denotes Member present
(1) Denote category of Reserve Member

[Note: Councillors Macleod-Cullinane and Ms Nana Asante also attended this meeting to speak on the items indicated at Minutes 124 and 128 respectively].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION I - Scrutiny Annual Report 2006-07

The Committee considered its annual report for 2006/07, which provided an overview of the work and achievements of the scrutiny bodies over the past year following a change in the administration and in the structure of the Scrutiny Sub-Committees. The annual report also looked forward and identified projects for 2007/08. Members requested a number of minor amendments to the report, including details of the memberships.

The Committee was proud of the achievements of Scrutiny and of the pioneering work carried out by Scrutiny Members on reviews with the support of officers.   The Committee felt that the Council had benefited from its sterling work in this regard.

The Chairman thanked Members and officers for their work on the annual report and for scrutinising challenging issues. Members thanked the Chairman for her service to Scrutiny and wished her a successful 2007/08 in her intended role as the Borough's Mayor.

The Committee, having agreed the annual report subject to minor amendments, and in order to meet its obligations under the Council's Constitution

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That the Committee's annual report for 2006/07, as now amended, be noted.

PART II - MINUTES

116.   **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

Ordinary Member   Reserve Member

Councillor Mrs Myra Michael   Councillor Dinesh Solanki

117.   **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following interest was declared:

Agenda Item 11 – Arts Culture Harrow – Report of the Challenge Panel
Councillor Jean Lammiman declared an interest in that she had given evidence to the Challenge Panel. She vacated the Chair during consideration of this item and took no part in the discussion or decision-making relating to it.

118.   **Arrangement of Agenda:**
The Chairman re-ordered the agenda and it was

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following agenda items be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

Agenda item	Special Circumstances / Grounds for Urgency
10. Reconfiguring Scrutiny	This report was being consulted on at the time of the dispatch of the agenda and was not received in its final form to be included on the agenda. Members were requested to consider this item, as a matter of urgency, as it would not be in the interests of the Council to delay consideration of this report and in order to allow recommendations - if any - to be made to the appropriate bodies of the Council for final decision.
11. Arts Culture Harrow – Report of the Challenge Panel	This report was not available at the time the agenda was printed and circulated as it was being consulted on. Members were requested to consider this item, as a matter of urgency, so that the recommendations of the Challenge Panel, set up by the Committee, could be considered.
13. Individual Performance Appraisal and Development	This report was not available at the time the agenda was printed and circulated because of an unforeseen absence of a member of staff. Members were requested to consider this item in order to avail themselves of the progress made on IPAD.
16. Scrutiny Annual Report 2006-07	This report was not available at the time the agenda was printed and circulated as it was being consulted on. Members were requested to consider this item, as a matter of urgency, so that the work of scrutiny could be reported to Council.

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

119.   **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and the Chairman be authorised to sign them when printed in the Council Bound Minute Volume.

120. **Public Questions:**
It was noted that the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Community Care Services and Issues Facing People with Special Needs had, as requested, provided responses to supplementary questions to public questions at the last meeting of the Committee. The Chairman stated that she would send the responses to the questioners and provide copies to all Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.

121. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions had been received.

122. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

123. **References from Council/Cabinet:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no references from Cabinet or Council.

124. **Fairtrade:**
The Committee received a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which set out the actions required for Harrow to become a Fairtrade Town. The report also outlined the progress made and how the intended objective could be achieved.

An officer introduced the report and stated that since the decision by Council in 2005, the original momentum on this matter had been lost and that the report was intended to re-invigorate the campaign for Fairtrade. The Council's partners would be engaged on this matter through the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP). Resources of the HSP would help reduce the impact on costs associated with the initiative.

The Chairman of the Fairtrade Steering Group informed the Committee that the new administration needed to take a view on how this matter ought to be progressed, which should be done with the assistance of a strategy and an action programme. He outlined the requirements necessary to achieve Fairtrade status.

Members welcomed the report and commented as follows:-

• They were disappointed that, despite the decision of Council, there had been no noticeable activity by the Council on this important issue and during the most recent Fairtrade fortnight.

• Fairtrade was especially important in a multi-cultural borough like Harrow.

Following further discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That (1) the Director of People, Performance and Policy submit further updates on this issue twice yearly, with the first one being presented in six months' time;

(2) the first update include details of the response received from Harrow In Business in relation to the assessment requested as set out in the officer report.

125. **Performance on the Local Area Agreement:**
The Committee received a report on the performance to date on the Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets. An officer introduced the report and highlighted the stretched targets, which, if met, would be rewarded. He stated that the performance on the stretched targets had been good but pointed out that LAA would have to be renegotiated soon.

In response to questions from Members, the officer:-

• commented on the relationship with the Government Office for London (GOL);

• stated that the stretched target on the number of residential burglaries where the victim was over 75 years had been managed well but that this target would be measured over a period of 3 years and therefore the situation could alter.

RESOLVED: That (1) the 3rd quarter performance, as set out in the performance tables attached to the officer report, be noted;

(2) monitoring reports be submitted after data on all indicators had been received, generally in June and November of each year.

126. **Occupational Health and Safety:**
The Committee received a report of the Director of Financial and Business Strategy, which set out the work of the Health at Work Group and information on the Occupational Health Service. An officer introduced the report and informed Members that central government had stated its intention on occupational health and risk management. He added that the work in Harrow was being conducted through the Health at Work Group, which was chaired by the Director of People, Performance and Policy. Training was provided through the Harrow Rules programme and other workshops. Members were informed that the work of Occupational Health was not always related to work related problems of staff.

The officer and the Director of People, Performance and Policy agreed to provide data to Members on the issues raised. They responded to questions as follows: -

- The report only addressed occupational health and safety matters relating to staff employed by the Council but information on how many of Harrow's residents travelled to other boroughs to work and vice-versa would be provided.

- Scorecards were being used to track trends and further data would be available by end of the month.

- Absence from work was monitored and there had been a downward trend; however, in the last year this trend had reversed.

- Work on the key recommendations submitted to the Health and Safety Partnership Board were being done within existing financial constraints and other funding avenues, such as the Local Area Agreement (LAA) would be explored.

- Staff or managers could make referrals to Occupational Health which would decide whether a case management was necessary or a staggered return to work.

- The national trend for absence for psychological reasons was going up in all sectors.

- The staff survey would be re-designed soon and a question on whether the Council was a stressful place to work could be incorporated; research by the Work Foundation had shown that Harrow's figures were not high when compared with the rest of the public sector.

Following further discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted;

(2) officers submit further updates on this issue twice yearly, with the first one being presented in July 2007 addressing the following:

-      indicators of trends and causations;

-      comparative statistics/national averages in relation to absences due to psychological reasons;

-      changes in the work environment and how national targets could be achieved;

-      work carried out by the Work Foundation in achieving work/life balance.

127. **Strong and Prosperous Communities – Implications for Scrutiny of the Local Government White Paper:**
An officer introduced the report, which set out the implications for scrutiny as a result of the Strong and Prosperous Communities Local Government White Paper. She outlined the wide-ranging implications for scrutiny, as set out in the report, and outlined its relationship with the report on Reconfiguring Scrutiny, which was also on the agenda.

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The officer highlighted the positive developments that would result from the White Paper and briefed Members on scrutiny's role as a 'gate keeper' of issues. Together with the Director of People, Performance and Policy and the Scrutiny Manager, she responded to questions from Members as follows:-

- It was unclear, at this stage, how Community Call for Action would function. It appeared that issues could be referred to another body provided reasons were given.

- Scrutiny's role in helping constituents would expand and this issue would be addressed as part of the report on Reconfiguring Scrutiny.

- Whilst formal consultation would be conducted during October-December 2007, there was a continuous process to influence the White Paper and it would be advisable to do this through the London Councils by the Leader of the Council.

- An early direction from Members of the Council on what was the best way forward for Harrow in relation to the White Paper would be helpful for officers as it was likely that implementation would be on a modular basis.

Members asked for further details and it was

RESOLVED: That (1) the report be noted and the Committee receive further reports on the impact of the White Paper on scrutiny structures;

(2) a further report be submitted to the July 2007 meeting of the Committee with a view to making a recommendation to the July 2007 Council on the following matters:-

- scenarios on how scrutiny would operate under the three local government models;

- how the proposed London Involvement Networks (LINks) would operate;

- various platforms/lobbying methods that could be used to influence the White Paper.

128. **Arts Culture Harrow - Report of the Challenge Panel:**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which set out the recommendations of the Arts Culture Harrow (ACH) Scrutiny Challenge Panel.

The Committee received a presentation from the Chairman of the Challenge Panel. The Chairman reported on the Panel's findings and stated that the investigation had not been in-depth. She explained why a Challenge Panel had been set up and provided background information on the ACH and, its predecessor body, Harrow Arts Centre Limited (HACL). In addition, the Panel Chairman commented on the discussion at the Challenge Panel about the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the ACH and the Council, and briefed the Committee on key observations and recommendations of the Panel.

The Chairman of the Challenge Panel thanked the Portfolio Holder for Lifelong Learning, Cultural Services and Issues Facing Older People, along with officers and volunteers for their commitment and for providing evidence to the Challenge Panel.

In response to questions, the Panel Chairman and other Members of the Challenge Panel stated that:-

- The Panel had found that the SLA had not been properly costed from a business perspective, as a result of which the ACH might not have had sufficient funds to carry on with the business.

- The ACH appeared to have inherited the poor practices of the HACL.

- Whilst access to the building occupied by the ACH was an issue, the location of ACH was not, as it had had a loyal clientele, and it wasn't the main reason why the organisation had folded. However, although it had expanded its audience, there had been a problem in attracting a new clientele. In any case, a site in Harrow Town Centre would have been better.

- A reduction in money had not correspondingly resulted in a reduction in the service.

- The ACH had received limited information on HACL and salaries had not reflected the levels of responsibilities of staff.

- The ACH had not been autonomous and appeared to be entirely dependent on the Council. However, the ACH was an independent organisation and took its own decision to go into liquidation.

Members commented as follows:-

- The Challenge Panel had highlighted issues of leadership, responsibility, the difficult relationships within the ACH and its financial situation, the latter of which appeared to have played a major part in its demise.

- The situation was being addressed by the Council, which had taken direct control of the provision of arts and cultural services in Harrow.

Following further discussion on whether to refer the findings to the relevant Portfolio Holder or the Cabinet, it was:

RESOLVED: That (1) the findings of the Arts Culture Harrow Scrutiny Challenge Panel be noted and its recommendation agreed;

(2) the report be referred to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

[Notes: (i) The Chairman, Councillor Jean Lammiman, having declared an interest in this item, the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Mitzi Green, took the Chair;

(ii) upon the conclusion of this item, Councillor Jean Lammiman resumed the Chair].

(See also Minute 117).

129. **Individual Performance Appraisal and Development:**
The Committee received a progress report on Individual Performance Appraisal Development (IPAD) since the matter was last reported to the Committee in April 2006. The report updated Members on development of the IPAD process, which included details on how the process was monitored and the development of competencies for all staff.

An officer introduced the report and informed Members of the progress made on the scheme, the robust monitoring systems that had been embedded and drew attention to the IPAD completion rates during 2006/07. She added that, since Quarter 3, the completion rates appeared to have fallen recently and informed Members of the reasons for this trend.

Members were briefed on the link between IPAD and IIP (Investors in People), the core competency framework and the training provided, details of which were set out in the officer report.

In response to questions from Members, the officer explained the frequency of appraisals and how disagreements could be resolved. Different procedures were in place for members of staff whose performance was poor. She added that £25,000 had been earmarked for further development work on the IPAD and that external trainers might be engaged to carry out the work. There were real benefits to acquiring IIP badge and these were outlined at the meeting. The Corporate IIP was earmarked for 2008.

In response to questions on IPAD for Members, the Director of People, Performance and Policy stated that he had been commissioned to work on developing skills for Members and that competencies unique to the role of Members would form part of this exercise.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and a progress report be submitted in April 2008.

130. **Reconfiguring Scrutiny:**
An officer introduced the report, which set out the arrangements proposed for the reconfiguration of the Council's scrutiny function. She outlined the proposed revised arrangements, which, if agreed, could come into force in the autumn following determination of various issues   nsideration of further reports by the various

approving bodies. She outlined the arrangements during the interim period. No changes were proposed to the current operation of the Call-In Sub-Committee.

Members were informed that the principles of Scrutiny would remain intact/sacrosanct in any proposals that were finally agreed. The Scrutiny Manager outlined the proposals, as set out in the report. It was important that Scrutiny had the ability to respond to any changes as a result of the White Paper on Local Government.

Members commented as follows:-

- Whilst the Scrutiny Sub-Committees might not be required to meet in the interim, the reviews on obesity, NHS Finance and cultural services, ought to be completed and submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- Advisory Members were valuable and ought to be retained. It was noted that there was a statutory requirement to appoint parent governor representatives and "church" representatives with voting rights.

- A number of issues needed resolving but the proposal to appoint lead scrutiny Members ought not to mirror Portfolio Holder positions.

- Holding the Executive to account should not be lost in the reconfiguration process.

- A seamless change was required/necessary and that the terms of reference of the proposed new bodies should not be duplicated.

Members were advised how the interim arrangements would work and of the need to establish all the existing bodies in the interim period. Advice on the appointments of the Vice-Chairmen of the Scrutiny Sub-Committees could be sent to the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairman suggested that Liberal Democrat Members ought to be invited to participate in the Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen meetings.

RESOLVED: To (1) agree to the establishment of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the outline terms of reference and responsibilities set out in paragraphs 3.10 - 3.13 of the officer report;

(2) agree to the establishment of the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee with the outline terms of reference and responsibilities set out in paragraphs 3.3 - 3.9 of the officer report;

(3) agree to the establishment of lead Councillor roles, as set out in paragraph 3.6 of the officer report;

(4) agree to suspend the meetings of the Scrutiny Sub-Committees, except where a further meeting was deemed necessary by the relevant Chairman and Vice-Chairman;

(5) receive a final report to the Committee in July 2007, for submission to Council in July 2007, to confirm the reconfiguration proposals and to address the outstanding issues, as set out in paragraph 3.14 of the officer report and below: -

a.   detailed terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Performance and Finance Sub-Committee

b.   areas of responsibility for lead scrutiny Councillors

c.   membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Performance and Finance Sub-Committee

d.   arrangements for payment of special responsibility allowances

e.   chairing arrangements for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Performance and Finance Sub-Committee

f.   programme of meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Performance and Finance Sub-Committee

g.   confirmation of co-option arrangements;

(5) agree the arrangements for finalising the work of the existing Committees and interim arrangements until the new system was able to go live, as outlined in paragraph 3.15 of the officer report;

(6) review the impact of the configuration in a year's time.

131.   **Scrutiny Annual Report 2006 - 07:**
(See Recommendation I).

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 10.35 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR JEAN LAMMIMAN
Chairman

REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(SPECIAL) MEETING HELD ON 14 MAY 2007

Chairman: * Councillor Stanley Sheinwald

Councillors: * B E Gate   * Paul Scott (1)
                 * Barry Macleod-Cullinane   * Mrs Rekha Shah
                 * Mrs Myra Michael   * Dinesh Solanki
                 * Jerry Miles   * Yogesh Teli (4)
                 * Phillip O'Dell (2)   * Jeremy Zeid (3)

* Denotes Member present
(1), (2), (3) and (4) Denote category of Reserve Members

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

132. **Appointment of Chairman:**

      RESOLVED: To note the appointment at the Annual Meeting of Council on 10 May 2007 of Councillor Stanley Sheinwald as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal Year 2007/08.

133. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

      RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member	Reserve Member
Councillor Mitzi Green	Councillor Philip O'Dell
Councillor Christopher Noyce	Councillor Paul Scott
Councillor Anthony Seymour	Councillor Jeremy Zeid
Councillor Mark Versallion	Councillor Yogesh Teli

134. **Declarations of Interest:**

      RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

135. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

      RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following item be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

Agenda item	Special Circumstances / Grounds for Urgency
7. Establishment of Sub-Committees 2007/08	This report was being consulted on at the time the agenda was printed and circulated. Members were requested to consider this item, as a matter of urgency, so that the Sub-Committees could be established.

      (2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

136. **Appointment of Vice-Chairman:**

      RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Mitzi Green as Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Municipal Year 2007/08.

137. **Minutes:**

      RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2007 be deferred to the next ordinary meeting of the Committee.

138.   **Establishment of Sub-Committees 2007/08:**

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committees of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be established for the Municipal Year 2007/08, or until the reconfiguration of the Sub-Committees is agreed, with the memberships, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen as detailed in the appendix to these minutes.

[Note: In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 36.1, Members agreed to suspend part of Procedure Rule 11.2 to allow the Vice-Chairmen of the Sub-Committees to be appointed at this meeting in light of the proposed reconfiguration of the Sub-Committees].

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 6.52 pm, closed at 6.55 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR STANLEY SHEINWALD
Chairman

SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEES

(Membership in order of political group nominations)

Conservative	**Labour**

(1) ADULT HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE (7)
   (Formerly Health and Social Care Sub-Committee)

(4)   **(3)**

I.
Members

Julia Merison	**Margaret Davine**
Mrs Myra Michael (CH)	**David Gawn**
Vina Mithani	**Mrs Rekha Shah (VC) ***
Robert Benson	

II.
Reserve
Members

1. Ashok Kulkarni	1. Mitzi Green
2. Dinesh Solanki	2. Keith Ferry
3. Jeremy Zeid	3. Keeki Thammaiah
4. Yogesh Teli	

(2)   CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (11)
   (Formerly Lifelong Learning Sub-Committee)

(8)   **(3)**

I.
Members

Lurline Champagnie	**B E Gate (VC) ***
Macleod-Cullinane	**Mitzi Green**
Julia Merison	**David Perry**
Vina Mithani	
Dinesh Solanki	
Yogesh Teli	
Mark Versallion (CH)	
Jeremy Zeid	

II.
Reserve
Members

1. Mrs Myra Michael	1. Ms Nana Asante
2. Anthony Seymour	2. Bill Stephenson
3. Janet Cowan	3. Mrs Sasi Suresh
4. Stanley Sheinwald	
5. Ashok Kulkarni	
6. -	
7. -	
8. -	

Voting Co-opted Members:
(1)   Two representatives of Voluntary Aided Sector
       - Mrs J Rammelt/Reverend P Reece
(2)   Two representatives of Parent Governors
       - Mrs D Speel (Primary)/Mr R Chauhan (Secondary)

(3) SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES (7)
(Formerly Strengthening Communities Sub-Committee)

(4)   **(3)**

I.
Members

Robert Benson	Mano Dharmarajah
Ashok Kulkarni	Mrs Sasi Suresh
Vina Mithani	Keeki Thammaiah (VC) *
Anthony Seymour (CH)	

II.
Reserve
Members

1. Mrs Lurline Champagnie	1. Dhirajlal Lavingia
2. Janet Cowan	2. B E Gate
3. -	3. Navin Shah
4. -	

(4) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE (7)
(Formerly Environment and the Economy Sub-Committee)

(4)   **(3)**

I.
Members

Ashok Kulkarni	Ms Nana Asante
Vina Mithani	Graham Henson
Stanley Sheinwald (CH)	Jerry Miles (VC) *
Dinesh Solanki	

II.
Reserve
Members

1. Yogesh Teli	1. Mano Dharmarajah
2. Jeremy Zeid	2. Phillip O'Dell
3. Anthony Seymour	3. Dhirajlal Lavingia
4. Janet Cowan	

(5) CALL-IN SUB-COMMITTEE (5)

(3)   **(2)**

I.
Members

Stanley Sheinwald	B E Gate
Anthony Seymour (CH)	Mitzi Green (VC) *
Mark Versallion	

II.
Reserve
Members

	1. Jeremy Zeid		1. Jerry Miles
	2. Mrs Lurline Champagnie		2. Graham Henson
	3. -		3. Keeki Thammaiah
†	4. Dinesh Solanki	†	4. Mrinal Choudhury
†	5. Julia Merison		

CH	= Chair
*	= Denotes Group Members for consultation on Administrative Matters
†	**[Note:** The appointed number of Reserves for each Group is in excess of the Committee Procedure Rule 3.2 provision, by virtue of Resolution 17: Overview and Scrutiny Committee (18.7.06).**]**

(6) CALL-IN SUB-COMMITTEE (Education)

(7)   **(2)**

I.
Members

Mrs Lurline Champagnie   **B E Gate**
Macleod-Cullinane   **Mitzi Green (VC) ***
Anthony Seymour (CH)
Stanley Sheinwald
Dinesh Solanki
Mark Versallion
Jeremy Zeid

II.
Reserve
Members

1. Vina Mithani   1. Jerry Miles
2. Yogesh Teli   2. Graham Henson
3. Ashok Kulkarni   † 3. Keeki Thammaiah
4. Janet Cowan   † 4. Mrinal Choudhury
5. Tony Seymour
6. Mark Versallion
7. -
† 8. -
† 9. -

Voting Co-opted Members:
(1)   Two representatives of Voluntary Aided Sector
        - Mrs J Rammelt/Reverend P Reece
(2)   Two representatives of Parent Governors
        - Mrs D Speel (Primary)/Mr R Chauhan (Secondary)

CH   = Chair
*   = Denotes Group Members for consultation on Administrative Matters

†   **[Note:** The appointed number of Reserves for each Group is in excess of the Committee Procedure
             Rule 3.2 provision, by virtue of Resolution 17: Overview and Scrutiny Committee (18.7.06).**]**

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REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(SPECIAL) MEETING HELD ON 12 JUNE 2007

Chairman: * Councillor Stanley Sheinwald

Councillors: * B E Gate   * Paul Scott (1)
                * Mitzi Green   * Anthony Seymour
                * Barry Macleod-Cullinane   * Navin Shah (4)
                * Julia Merison (1)   * Yogesh Teli (4)
                * Phillip O'Dell (2)   * Mark Versallion

* Denotes Member present
(1), (2) and (4) Denote category of Reserve Members

[Note: Councillors Chris Mote and David Ashton, having been invited to the meeting in their capacity as Leader and Deputy Leader respectively, also attended this meeting to speak on the item indicated at Minute 145 below. They also participated in the discussions relating to Minutes 146 and 148 below].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

139.   **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

        RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member	Reserve Member
Councillor Mrs Myra Michael	Councillor Yogesh Teli
Councillor Dinesh Solanki	Councillor Julia Merison
Councillor Jerry Miles	Councillor Philip O'Dell
Councillor Mrs Rekha Shah	Councillor Navin Shah
Councillor Christopher Noyce	Councillor Paul Scott

140.   **Declarations of Interest:**

        RESOLVED: To note that the following interests were declared:-

        Agenda Item 7 – Question and Answer Session with the Leader, the Deputy Leader and the Chief Executive
        The following Members indicated personal interests set out below and remained in the room to ask questions, respond to questions and listen to the responses:-

        (i)   Councillor Mitzi Green stated that her relative was in receipt of disability benefit.

        (ii)   Councillor Julia Merison stated that her son, who suffered from a handicap, received support from the Council.

        (iii)   Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane stated that his sister taught at a school in Harrow.

        (iv)   Councillor Chris Mote, who was not a Member of this Committee, stated that his brother was in receipt of disability benefit and that his wife, who was also a Councillor, taught at a school in Harrow.

141.   **Arrangement of Agenda:**
        Members referred to the tabled report on the Draft Corporate Plan 2007/10, which they considered to be inappropriate to admit late to the agenda. Some Members felt that late reports, a systematic problem in Harrow, neutralised any views they might have wished to make.

        An officer explained why the report had not been available earlier and stated that the Cabinet on 21 June 2007 would have to consider the Plan in order to meet the statutory deadline of 30 June 2007 for the publication of the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP), which was an element of the Corporate Plan.

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The Chief Executive empathised with Members' comments and spoke about the need to plan ahead. He undertook to take this message back to his management team.

Members agreed to defer consideration of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's July 2007 meeting and refer their comments to the July Council meeting, which would approve the Plan.

RESOLVED: That (1) the Draft Corporate Plan 2007/10 be deferred to the July 2007 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

142.   **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 24 April 2007 and the special meeting held on 14 May 2007 be deferred until the next ordinary meeting of the Committee.

143.   **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

144.   **Membership of Call-In Sub-Committee (Education):**

RESOLVED: That the revised membership of the Call-In Sub-Committee (Education), as set out on page 1 of the agenda, be agreed.

145.   **Question and Answer Session with the Leader, the Deputy Leader and the Chief Executive:**
On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman welcomed the Leader, the Deputy Leader and the Chief Executive to the meeting. He stated that the Committee looked forward to hearing the experiences of the Leader and Deputy Leader during their first year in administration and from the Chief Executive on his impressions of Harrow and how the Council needed to improve. Questions had been arranged under eight themes: Finance, Recycling, Scrutiny, Olympics, Town Centre, Congestion, Planning and Improving Harrow.

Before inviting Members of the Committee to ask questions, the Chairman reminded them that the spirit of Scrutiny was to hold a robust question and answer session in a non-partisan environment. Additionally, Members should question the political and officer leadership of the Council about activity and priorities for the future.

Prior to receiving questions, the Leader and the Deputy Leader spoke about their aspirations for the Council and the range of measures already in place to improve the Council. They spoke about the financial challenges facing the Council and the difficulties they had faced in their first year in administration, which had resulted in some unpalatable decisions. The Leader and the Deputy Leader welcomed Scrutiny's contributions in improving the services provided by the Council.

The Chief Executive outlined non-political challenges facing the Council. He identified areas where improvements were necessary and congratulated Harrow on the innovative work it had undertaken. There was untapped potential in Harrow and specific measures were needed to ensure a 'can do' culture. The Chief Executive outlined his ambitions for the Council and explained how he intended to build on Harrow's infrastructure and foundations.

Members were invited to put their questions to the Leader, the Deputy Leader and the Chief Executive under the various themes set out below. Members also asked supplemental questions, which were duly answered.

FINANCE

In response to questions, the Leader and the Deputy Leader, together with the Chief Executive, briefed Members on the challenging financial situation facing the Council. Members were informed that:-

•   The grant settlement for Harrow was low when compared with that received by other outer London boroughs – a differential of £76 per head on the revenue support grant alone. When coupled with the low level of reserves currently held by the Council, it did not provide flexibility to manoeuvre.

- The administration would focus on the provision of services to the needy and would evaluate the impact of the projected savings. It would welcome suggestions from Scrutiny on how savings could be achieved with minimum impact on services.

- The transferring of costs by the local PCTs continued to exacerbate the challenging financial situation and 'uncomfortable' decisions would have to be made by the Council. Incremental savings were easier to achieve.

- When setting its budget, the administration had listened to its partners and stakeholders, particularly the voluntary sector. As a result, adjustments to the budget had been made. Lessons had been learnt and consultations improved. The grant giving function of the Council would be reviewed and both parties (the Council and the Voluntary Sector) would work together on the proposal. A reduction of £100k in scrutiny's budget had not impacted on the staffing support provided to scrutiny. The robustness of a re-modelled scrutiny would have to be assessed. The situation on call-in was being investigated.

- The Prosperity Action Teams (PATs) were not a waste of resources in the current challenging financial situation. They were an excellent example of how decisions could be devolved to a more local level. In fact, the Local Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' recommended such initiatives.

- The capital cost of re-opening Wealdstone High Street was £650k. The re-opening would help regenerate the High Street and make it attractive to investments. Transport for London's (TfL's) decision on the proposal was awaited. It would be appropriate to carry out consultations thereafter.

- The new organisational structure would lay down the foundations for improved performance and help improve efficiency. Measures that would increase productivity and change the culture of the organisation would be introduced. Joined-up working and innovation ought to pervade the organisation with priorities identified.

- Only those assets, which were surplus to requirements and costly to refurbish, would be sold to replenish the Council's capital base. There was no programme to dispose of all assets.

- Subject to the provisions in the Gambling Act, the introduction of a local lottery would be explored; the money would make a contribution to the Council's capital budget and would be ring-fenced for specific measures only.

RECYCLING

The Leader and the Deputy Leader responded to questions and provided figures on recycled waste, the number of contaminated bins and the steps being taken to reach the recycling targets set by the Government. It was not intended to introduce a 'carrot and stick' approach in Harrow. They acknowledged that the newly introduced systems had caused problems but that the systems had now bedded-in and the blue bins in particular were very popular. The use of plastic sacks instead of wheelie bins had been discounted for environmental reasons. It was intended to collect recyclables from flats and the challenge of collecting such waste from businesses would to explored.

Information on how recycled material collected was measured was provided to Members. It was noted that the bins were user-friendly, including for the visually impaired.

The Deputy Leader undertook to respond to specific queries on recycling raised during the course of the meeting.

SCRUTINY

The Chief Executive responded to Members' questions on the transparency and effectiveness of scrutiny in Harrow. He stated that it was premature to respond on its effectiveness as he had only recently joined Harrow. However, the core function of scrutiny was to provide a 'check and balance' on the Executive; a policing and an advisory role. Scrutiny ought to reflect the concerns of the community rather than those solely of the Council and it should bring partners together in a constructive way. It had a conciliatory role to play, to be inclusive and add value to processes.

The Leader stated that scrutiny should develop new policies for the Council and that the Cabinet would make such requests. He gave examples of which reviews carried out by scrutiny had been helpful and those that had been interesting but not relevant to the work of the Council. Given the limited resources available to scrutiny, it was important to use these resources constructively for the benefit of the Council and its residents.

OLYMPICS

In response to questions on the infrastructure and how Harrow could contribute towards the 2012 Olympics, the Leader briefed Members on the work carried out, to date, by the Olympic Task Force. His ambition was to build 3 leisure centres in Harrow and that those with the potential for an Olympic training status should be in operation by 2010. An integrated approach was required. The aim would be for leisure centres to be self-financing and provide training facilities for Harrow's youth who currently had to find such facilities outside Harrow. Scrutiny would be involved from the outset. A Scrutiny Member suggested a Challenge Panel on the provision of Olympic size swimming pools.

TOWN CENTRE

Members posed questions on the yield on properties in the Town Centre, empty retail units and the piecemeal re-development. In response, the Deputy Leader stated that:-

- the retail sector was being encouraged to invest in the Town Centre;

- an assessment of the yield on properties owned by the Council had been undertaken;

- the proposals for the provision of art facilities at Gayton Road could not be considered to be a piecemeal approach. It would compliment the administration's holistic vision for the Town Centre.

The Chief Executive stated that the Town Centre appeared dated and lacked distinctiveness. He would be personally involved in its development.

In terms of empty outlets, the Town Centre had a low vacancy rate and long-term vacancy rates were low. However, competition from other centres meant that this position was unlikely to be maintained without substantial modernisation. The Chief Executive agreed that a holistic approach was required and made suggestions for long-term improvements. The Council would facilitate the development of the Town Centre by encouraging businesses and freeholders to invest.

CONGESTION

Members asked what progress had been made "getting Harrow moving". In response, the Leader identified projects that would help reduce congestion in Harrow. He referred to the following projects:- provision of parking in Stanmore as a result of the new Wembley Stadium and the 2012 Olympics; opening Wealdstone High Street to through traffic and the rephrasing of the traffic signals.

PLANNING – BRIEFING ARRANGEMENTS

The Leader acknowledged that a resolution on this matter was required. He had discussed the matter with the Chief Executive.

IMPROVING HARROW

A Member requested clarification on the over-arching vision of the administration for Harrow. The Leader stated that the wider vision was set out in the Corporate Plan 2007-10 and was encapsulated as a 'Cosmopolitan, Confident and Cohesive' Harrow.

Conclusion

The Chairman thanked the Leader, the Deputy Leader and the Chief Executive for their attendance and responses.

146.   **Corporate Governance:**
          The Corporate Director of Finance introduced a report, which provided an update on a range of Corporate Governance matters and included an action plan for 2007/08. She responded to a number of questions from Members as follows:-

- The CIPFA/SOLACE framework was not mandatory and was intended to develop best practice in local government. In terms of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), there was an expectation that the CIPFA/SOLACE framework was adopted.

- The intention behind the value for money framework was to understand how the Council fared against its competitors and to take action to improve.

- The Communications Strategy, central to the CPA rating, had been carried forward from 2006/07 and would be presented to the Cabinet following a review conducted by Westminster recently.

- In order to manage risks, effective governance arrangements with Partners were required and it was important to manage our relationship with stakeholders.

- Training would be provided to staff at all levels.

The Committee thanked the Director for the corporate governance arrangements she had put in place.

RESOLVED: To note the progress made in 2006/07 and approve the action plans for 2007/08.

147. **Review of First Year of Partnership with Accord MP:**
An officer introduced a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which outlined the proposal for a review of the lessons to be learnt from the first year of partnership with Accord MP in the delivery of public realm infrastructure services. She responded to questions and informed Members that the Cabinet had made the request for a review.

In noting the request for a review, Members were of the view that it ought to be the purview of the prospective Performance and Management Scrutiny Sub-Committee, which had been proposed as part of the reconfiguration of scrutiny. On the assumption that the Sub-Committee would be established by the July 2007 Overview and Scrutiny Committee, a meeting could be convened at the end of July. A Member suggested a light touch review with an established time frame.

The Chief Executive recommended a review of the 1-year partnership with Accord MP. He stated that the partnership was unique and that the lessons learnt could be applied to future projects for the benefit of the Council. A Member echoed these sentiments and suggested that there was a need to take a strategic view on this matter, which could have an impact on the Council's future CPA rating.

RESOLVED: That (1) a review of the Council's partnership for public realm infrastructure services be undertaken by the prospective Performance and Management Scrutiny Sub-Committee at its meeting to be set up at the end of July 2007;

(2) it be noted that the membership of the review group to undertake this project should not be restricted to Members of Scrutiny Committees only.

148. **Extension and Termination of the Meeting:**
In accordance with the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 6.7(ii)(b), it was

RESOLVED: (1) At 10.00 pm to continue until 10.15 pm;

(2) at 10.15 pm to continue until 10.30 pm.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.35 pm, closed at 10.25 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR STANLEY SHEINWALD
Chairman

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REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2007

Chairman:	* Councillor Stanley Sheinwald		
Councillors:	* B E Gate	*	Anthony Seymour
	* Mitzi Green	*	Mrs Rekha Shah
	* Barry Macleod-Cullinane	*	Dinesh Solanki
	* Jerry Miles	*	Yogesh Teli (3)
	* Paul Scott (1)	*	Mark Versallion

* Denotes Member present
(1) and (3) Denote category of Reserve Members

[Note: Councillor Jeremy Zeid also attended this meeting to speak on Recommendations I and II and the items indicated at Minutes 157 to 160 below].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION I - Reconfiguring Scrutiny

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which set out proposals for the reconfiguration of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function whilst maintaining the existing principles of Scrutiny as an independent Councillor-led function working with local people to improve services.

Members commented on various aspects of the report, including the special responsibility allowance (SRA) for scrutiny Members with additional responsibilities. The Committee was of the view that the Scrutiny Policy Leads and the Scrutiny Performance Leads for Children and Young People, Sustainable Development and Enterprise and Safer and Stronger Communities ought to receive the same SRA. However, the Leads for Adult Health and Social Care should receive a higher SRA to reflect and recognise the demands arising from that area of work.

Some Members gave a guarded welcome to the reconfiguration in the knowledge that there would be an opportunity to carry out a review after 6 and 12 months to identify changes. The following issues were raised:

- the existing advisers, whose specialist advice had been valuable to the work of scrutiny, ought to be retained;

- a non-partisan approach was essential to ensure effective working of scrutiny;

- it was essential that the Scrutiny Review Group on NHS finances continued to meet;

- the proposed Committees might not have adequate capacity to scrutinise the health service and the police effectively;

- the increased size of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee might be unwieldy;

- scrutiny was moving towards informal structures with some meetings being held in private, thereby reducing transparency;

- the reconfiguration and the support received by Members were driven by the budget, which might compromise the effectiveness of scrutiny.

Other Members were of the view that a focus on outputs and key issues would ensure effective scrutiny. The reconfiguration would provide Members with flexibility and an opportunity to work differently rather than through Committees.

Members were assured that the scrutiny officer support would remain the same. Other Directorates and Partners would also provide support. Officers would ensure that issues that required scrutinising were not overlooked, and that the Scrutiny Leads were fully supported. Given the changed nature of Councillors' responsibilities and the absence of a service-specific committee structure, there would be mandatory training for all scrutiny Councillors on health, children's issues and community safety. In addition, there would be a compulsory session on scrutiny in general for all Councillors.

Some of the existing ways of working would continue, and a review of the reconfiguration would be conducted in six months' time.

Having agreed the reconfiguration and the terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee, including the establishment of Scrutiny Policy Leads and Scrutiny Performance Leads to consider the policy and performance issues in relation to Adult Health and Social Care, Children and Young People, Sustainable Development and Enterprise and Safer and Stronger Communities, it was

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That (1) the Overview and Scrutiny function of the Council be reconfigured as set out in the report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy circulated to all Members of the Council;

(2) the reconfigured Overview and Scrutiny Committee be established;

(3) the membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be appointed, including its Chairman;

(4) the terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be agreed;

(5) the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the SRAs be noted and agreed.

(See also Minute 157).

RECOMMENDATION II - Draft Corporate Plan 2007-2010

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which set out the values and objectives for the work that would be undertaken by the Council between 2007-2010.

The Council's Corporate Plan also included the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP), approved by the Cabinet on 21 June 2007, which provided a flavour of the Council's performance across a wide range of services. Attention was drawn to an updated version of the Corporate Plan, which had been circulated to all Members.

Members commented on the Corporate Plan, including the presentation of the BVPP, both of which would inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme allowing it to challenge and act as a critical friend.

The Committee also drew attention to the proposal to empower the community to request that items be called-in in future and suggested that this should be included in the draft Corporate Plan in the section about participation.

Resolved to RECOMMEND: (to Council)

That (1) it be noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes the efforts made by the administration in turning its manifesto into specific corporate priorities as practical examples of their vision against which the Council would be judged;

(2) the draft Corporate Plan be amended by the inclusion of the public right to call-in within the participation section.

(See also Minute 159).

PART II - MINUTES

149.   **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member	Reserve Member
Councillor Mrs Myra Michael	Councillor Yogesh Teli
Councillor Christopher Noyce	Councillor Paul Scott

150.   **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that the following interest was declared:

Councillor Mitzi Green declared an interest in that her relative was in receipt of disability benefit. Her interest was general and did not relate to a specific item on the agenda. She declared the interest in case there was a discussion on benefits during the course of the meeting.

151.   **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That all items be considered with the press and public present.

152.   **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 24 April 2007 and the special meetings held on 14 May 2007 and 12 June 2007 be deferred until printed in the Council Bound Minute Volume.

153.   **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 8.

154.   **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions had been received.

155.   **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at the meeting under the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10.

156.   **References from Council/Cabinet:**

RESOLVED: To note that no reports were received.

157.   **Reconfiguring Scrutiny:**
Further to Recommendation I, there was some discussion about the availability and release of papers in advance of meetings. A Member made a general comment on the need for better timetabling. It was noted that the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Committee would be meeting with the Chief Executive where this matter would also be discussed. It was clarified that, in relation to paragraph 3.42 of the report, the agreement of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman would be required. Some Members expressed reservations on the proposed local government leadership models.

RESOLVED: That (1) the new Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Performance and Finance Sub-Committee be established;

(2) the terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee be agreed;

(3) the Committee size, composition and special responsibilities of the new structure be agreed;

(4) the principles for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowance for Scrutiny Councillors be agreed and referred to the Leader of the Council for consideration;

(5) the proposals regarding the f   :y of meetings for each Committee be agreed;

(6) the Chairmen, the Vice-Chairmen and the policy and performance leads review the effectiveness of the reconfigured function after 6 and 12 months and identify and report back appropriate changes as necessary.

158. **Cultural Services Review – Final Report:**
The Committee received a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which introduced the final report of the Scrutiny Review Group on Cultural Services.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Review Group highlighted some of the key findings, and thanked Members of the Review Group and officers for their work and support. She stated that the Review Group had met with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services to discuss the recommendations.

Following a discussion on the governance arrangements for contracts and Service Level Agreements (SLAs), the need to review some of them to identify best principles, and to incorporate this area of work into the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme, it was

RESOLVED: That (1) the report and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Group on Cultural Services be endorsed;

(2) the report be referred to Cabinet for consideration;

(3) Cabinet be requested to:

    (i)   note that the report highlighted the need to strengthen governance structures in the Council's current SLAs, contracts and partnerships around cultural services, and

    (ii)   implement a review of the wider principles that should inform the governance structures of all the Council's SLAs, contracts and partnerships.

(4) the Cultural Services Review be placed on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme in six months' time.

159. **Draft Corporate Plan 2007 -2010:**
Further to Recommendation II, Members commented on the Draft Corporate Plan 2007-2010 and the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) with a view to informing the Committee's Work Programme. They identified a number of areas where further scrutiny was essential, additional information was required and listed areas that needed to be included in Scrutiny's Work Programme. They noted that there was an opportunity to add value to the flagship actions identified in the Corporate Plan and the BVPIs.

Members raised questions on the proposed new Sports Centres, education issues such as absence rates in primary schools, Children's Centres, the number of racial incidents in the Borough, homelessness and the traffic schemes. Members identified areas on which the lead scrutiny Members could focus. They noted the need to appreciate the underlying trends when examining performance.

The Director of People, Performance and Policy and an officer welcomed the suggestions made by Members to improve the information provided on the BVPIs, such as providing a fuller narrative in the comments section. They informed Members that templates for the provision of information on BVPIs were set by central government and that some of the requests from Members would have to be included elsewhere. The Director assured Members that the areas suggested for further scrutiny would be incorporated in the draft Work Programme.

RESOLVED: That the suggestions made by Members be included in the draft Scrutiny Work Programme.

160. **Local Area Agreement – Annual Performance Update:**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which updated Members on performance against the indicators in the Local Area Agreement (LAA). Particular reference was made to the progress against the stretched indicators, which had the potential to earn reward grant.

In response to questions on stretched targets relating to school exclusions and attendance, an officer explained that:-

- where the stretched targets were in danger of not being met, the Chairmen accountable for those areas had been requested to develop action plans to address the current under-performance. The Harrow Strategic Partnership Executive, at its meeting on 9 August 2007, would be considering these action plans;

- the Corporate Director of Children's Services would be made aware of the Committee's comment regarding the introduction of a physically challenging environment for pupils;

- organisations that delivered on stretched targets, including schools, would earn a proportion of any reward grant earned;

- the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, when dealing with education business at its future meeting, could look into the issue of exclusions;

- research on the reward payment rules would be carried out and sent to Members.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

161. **Scrutiny Scorecard:**
An officer introduced the report, which set out proposals for a new method for scrutiny to monitor its own performance.   Members welcomed the proposals with some reservations.   A Member remarked that this would be a valuable tool for the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee. Another Member was of the view that the subjective nature of some of the measures might make them difficult to assess. The point was also made that, in respect of measure C7 – Raising Scrutiny's Profile, the residents' panel had not yet been established. The scrutiny officer advised that these issues had been taken into account in the development of the scorecard, and that the residents' panel was to be established as a corporate flagship action in 2007/08.

RESOLVED: That the establishment of a performance management system for the scrutiny function, as set out in the annual and quarterly scrutiny scorecards attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed.

162. **Extension and Termination of Meeting:**
In accordance with the provisions of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 6.7(ii)(b), it was

RESOLVED: At (1) 10.00 pm to continue until 10.15 pm;

(2) at 10.15 pm to continue until 10.20 pm;

(3) at 10.20 pm to continue until 10.25 pm.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.36 pm, closed at 10.20 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR STANLEY SHEINWALD
Chairman

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REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(SPECIAL) MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2007

Chairman:	* Councillor Stanley Sheinwald		
Councillors:	* Robert Benson (1)	*	Jerry Miles
	* Don Billson	*	Anthony Seymour
	* Mrs Janet Cowan	*	Dinesh Solanki
	* Mrs Margaret Davine	*	Yogesh Teli
	* B E Gate	*	Mark Versallion
	* Mitzi Green		

Voting Co-opted:	(Voluntary Aided)	(Parent Governors)
	Mrs J Rammelt	Mr R Chauhan
	Reverend P Reece	Mrs D Speel

* Denotes Member present
(1) Denotes category of Reserve Member

[Note: Councillors Ashok Kulkarni and Barry Macleod-Cullinane were also in attendance at this meeting – see Minute 170 below].

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL

PART II - MINUTES

163. **Appointment of Chairman:**
Further to the re-establishment of this Committee at the Council meeting on 12 July 2007, it was

RESOLVED: To note the appointment at the Council meeting on 12 July 2007 of Councillor Stanley Sheinwald as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2007/08.

164. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Member:-

Ordinary Member	Reserve Member
Councillor Myra Michael	Councillor Robert Benson

165. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note that there were no declarations of interests made by Members in relation to the business transacted at this meeting.

166. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the following items be admitted late to the agenda by virtue of the special circumstances and grounds for urgency detailed below:-

Agenda item		Special Circumstances / Grounds for Urgency
7.	Establishment of Sub-Committees and Appointment of Scrutiny Lead Members 2007/2008	This report was being consulted on at the time the agenda was printed and circulated. Members were requested to consider this item as a matter of urgency, in order that the Sub-Committees could be established.
9.	Dates of Future Meetings	The dates were being consulted on at the time the agenda was printed and circulated. The Committee was requested to consider this item as a matter of urgency, in order that all Members had as much notice as possible of the dates of the Committee's meetings for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

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(2) all items be considered with the press and public present.

167.   **Appointment of Vice-Chairman:**

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mitzi Green be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2007/2008.

168.   **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 24 April 2007, the Special meetings held on 14 May and 12 June 2007, and the Ordinary meeting held on 10 July 2007, be deferred until the next Ordinary meeting.

169.   **Establishment of Sub-Committees and Appointment of Scrutiny Lead Members 2007/2008:**

RESOLVED: That (1) the Sub-Committees of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be established for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2007/08 with the memberships and Chairmen detailed in Appendix 1 to these minutes; and

(2) the Policy Lead Members and the Performance Lead Members for scrutiny be appointed as set out in Appendix 2.

170.   **Review of First Year of Partnership with Accord MP:**
The Committee considered a report of the Director of People, Performance and Policy, which outlined a proposal for a review of the first year of the partnership with Accord MP for the delivery of public realm infrastructure services.

The Committee endorsed the proposal, and noted that there was a need to identify Members to undertake this project. Councillors Don Billson, Robert Benson, Mrs Janet Cowan, Barry Macleod-Cullinane, B E Gate, Ashok Kulkarni, Dinesh Solanki, Yogesh Teli and Mark Versallion indicated that they may be interested in serving on the review group.

RESOLVED: That (1) the proposal to undertake a review of the Council's partnership for public realm infrastructure services be agreed; and

(2) the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee, at its first meeting, develop a detailed project plan and scope, with the intention of starting work on the project immediately.

171.   **Dates of Future Meetings:**
Members received a tabled paper which set out the dates agreed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for meetings of the Committee for the remainder of the 2007/2008 Municipal Year.

Those meetings which would include discussion of health, education or partnership matters had also been identified.

RESOLVED: To note the dates of meetings of the Committee for the remainder of the 2007/2008 Municipal Year, as follows:-

6 September 2007	
25 September 2007	(Health)
9 October 2007	(Education)
30 October 2007	
13 November 2007	(Question and Answer session)
20 November 2007	(Education)
11 December 2007	
28 January 2008	(Education)
12 February 2008	(Health)
31 March 2008	(Health)
22 April 2008	(Partnership matters)

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 10.30 pm, closed at 10.38 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR STANLEY SHEINWALD
Chairman

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APPENDIX 1

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SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEES

(Membership in order of political group nominations)

Conservative	**Labour**	**Liberal Democrat**

(1) PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE (11)

(6)	**(4)**	**(1)**
I. **Members** **Robert Benson** **Don Billson** **Manji Kara** **Ashok Kulkarni** **Barry Macleod-Cullinane** **Mark Versallion (CH)**	**Ms Nana Asante** **B E Gate *** **Mitzi Green** **Mrs Rekha Shah**	**Christopher Noyce**
II. **Reserve** **Members** 1. Yogesh Teli 2. Mrs Janet Cowan 3. Jeremy Zeid 4. Mrs Kinnear 5. Dinesh Solanki 6. Stanley Sheinwald	1. Phillip O'Dell 2. Bill Stephenson 3. Thaya Idaikkadar 4. Keeki Thammaiah	1. Paul Scott

(2) CALL-IN SUB-COMMITTEE (5)

(3)	**(2)**
I. **Members** **Stanley Sheinwald** **Anthony Seymour (CH)** **Mark Versallion**	**B E Gate** **Mitzi Green ***
II. **Reserve** **Members** 1. Jeremy Zeid 2. Mrs Lurline Champagnie 3. - † 4. Dinesh Solanki † 5. Julia Merison	1. Jerry Miles 2. Graham Henson 3. Keeki Thammaiah † 4. Mrinal Choudhury

CH   = Chair
*   = Denotes Group Members for consultation on Administrative Matters

†   **[Note:** The appointed number of Reserves for each Group is in excess of the Committee Procedure Rule 3.2 provision, by virtue of Resolution 17: Overview and Scrutiny Committee (18.7.06).**]**

(3) CALL-IN SUB-COMMITTEE (Education)

(7)   **(2)**

I.
Members

Mrs Lurline Champagnie   **B E Gate**
Barry Macleod-Cullinane   **Mitzi Green ***
Anthony Seymour (CH)
Stanley Sheinwald
Dinesh Solanki
Mark Versallion
Jeremy Zeid

II.
Reserve
Members

1. Mrs Vina Mithani	1. Jerry Miles
2. Yogesh Teli	2. Graham Henson
3. Ashok Kulkarni	3. Keeki Thammaiah
4. Janet Cowan	† 4. Mrinal Choudhury
5. Robert Benson	
6. Julia Merison	
7. -	
† 8. -	
† 9. -	

Voting Co-opted Members:
(1)   Two representatives of Voluntary Aided Sector
        - Mrs J Rammelt/Reverend P Reece
(2)   Two representatives of Parent Governors
        - Mrs D Speel (Primary)/Mr R Chauhan (Secondary)

CH   = Chair
*   = Denotes Group Members for consultation on Administrative Matters

†   **[Note:** The appointed number of Reserves for each Group is in excess of the Committee Procedure
                      Rule 3.2 provision, by virtue of Resolution 17: Overview and Scrutiny Committee (18.7.06).**]**

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APPOINTMENT OF LEAD MEMBERS FOR SCRUTINY

1.   The following persons are appointed as Policy Lead Members for Scrutiny:

Adult Health and Social Care   Councillor Myra Michael

Children and Young People   Councillor Mrs Margaret Davine

Sustainable Development and Enterprise   Councillor Jerry Miles

Safer and Stronger Communities   Councillor Anthony Seymour

NB: The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is also the Policy Lead Member for Corporate Effectiveness and Finance.

2.   The following persons are appointed as Performance Lead Members for Scrutiny:

Adult Health and Social Care   Councillor Mrs Rekha Shah

Children and Young People   Councillor Mrs Janet Cowan

Sustainable Development and Enterprise   Councillor Dinesh Solanki

Safer and Stronger Communities   Councillor Ms Nana Asante

NB: The Chairman of the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee is also the Performance Lead Member for Corporate Effectiveness and Finance.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the following power and duties:

1. To oversee a more targeted and proportionate work programme that can help secured service improvement through in depth investigation of poor performance and the development of an effective strategy/policy framework for the council and partners

   2. To have general oversight of the council's scrutiny function;

   3. To support the executive's policy development function and the long-term strategic direction of the borough;

   4. To anticipate policy changes and determine their potential impact on residents;

   5. To consider the council and partners strategic approach to service delivery;

   6. To undertake detailed investigation of service/financial performance in order to recommend policy changes and to commission light touch investigations by the Performance and Finance sub committee;

   7. To consider items included in the Forward Plan as appropriate;

   8. To consider such urgent items as are appropriate – Community Calls for Action, area scrutiny.

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(1) **PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE (11)**

	(6)	**(4)**	**(1)**
I. **Members**	Robert Benson Janet Cowan Dinesh Solanki Ashok Kulkarni Barry Macleod-Cullinane Mark Versallion (CH)	Ms Nana Asante B E Gate * Mitzi Green Mrs Rekha Shah	Christopher Noyce
II. **Reserve** **Members**	1. Yogesh Teli 2. Don Billson 3. Jeremy Zeid 4. Mrs Kinnear 5. Manji Kara 6. Stanley Sheinwald	1. Phillip O'Dell 2. Bill Stephenson 3. Thaya Idaikkadar 4. Keeki Thammaiah	1. Paul Scott

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Harrow COUNCIL
LONDON

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	6 September 2007
Subject:	Appointment of Advisers to the Committee
Key Decision: (Executive-side only)	N/A
Responsible Officer:	Director of Legal and Governance Services
Portfolio Holder:	N/A
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report advises Members on the appointment of non-voting advisers to the Committee for the Municipal Year 2007/2008.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1)   Members are requested to consider the information outlined below and to appoint advisers to the Panel for the 2006/2007 Municipal Year accordingly;

(2)   Members are requested to propose the appointment of any other advisers.

SECTION 2 – REPORT

1.   **Background**

1.1   The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rule 2.5, as set out in the Council's Constitution, makes provision for the appointment of non-voting advisers. It also states that such advisers will not be members of the Committee. However, the benefit of making such appointments is that the Committee will have advisers whose expertise and knowledge of the borough and subject area would add value to the work of the Committee, which would benefit the borough as a whole.

1.2.   The Adult Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee, a former Sub-Committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, appointed Mr Owen Cock (an independent adviser advising as a lay local resident) and Ms Jean Bradlow (the then Director of Public Health - Harrow PCT) as non-voting advisers. Members were appreciative of their contributions to the work of the Sub-Committee.

2.   **Matters to be Determined**

2.1.   Following reconfiguration of scrutiny in Harrow, it is proposed that Mr Owen Cock be appointed as a non-voting adviser to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that the Harrow PCT be invited to nominate another adviser, as Ms Jean Bradlow has left the services of Harrow PCT. Members should note that Mr Cock has been invited to attend meetings of the Committee.

2.2.   The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has proposed that the Metropolitan Police (Harrow Police) be invited to nominate an adviser to represent their organisation, as the Committee would also benefit from their expertise and knowledge.

2.3.   Members of the Committee consider whether there are any additional non-voting advisers that they would like to invite to participate in the Committee. Whilst there are no restrictions on the number of non-voting advisers that the Committee can appoint, it is suggested that the number ought to be limited in order to avoid the risk of the Committee becoming too unwieldy.

3.   **Cost of Proposals**

3.1.   None.

4.   **Legal Implications**

4.1.   The appointment of non-voting advisers is in line with good practice identified in government guidance for the scrutiny function.

5. **Equalities Impact**

5.1. To promote and enhance local democracy and public service values by increasing opportunities for participation, through effective communication and by developing the capacity to empower Harrow's communities.

6. **Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations**

6.1. Engaging with the police in the activities of the Committee could enhance our capacity to address issues under this Act.

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Name: Myfanwy Barrett	✔	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 23 August 2007		
Name: Jill Travers	✔	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 8 August 2007		

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact: Daksha Ghelani, Senior Democratic Services Officer, 020 8484 1881

Background Papers*:* Minutes of Adult Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

IF APPROPRIATE, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	NO
2.	Corporate Priorities	NO
3.	Manifesto Pledge Reference Number	-

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Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust

Summary of application to become an NHS Foundation Trust

Background

As part of the patient and public involvement strategy, the NHS is promoting the establishment of NHS Foundation Trusts to manage the delivery of hospital care in the NHS in the future. NHS Foundation Trusts will be more accountable to their local communities, patients and staff than at present. This paper summarises the application being made by the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust which is intending to become an NHS Foundation Trust in April 2008. Full details of the application and the consultation exercise are contained in the printed version of the Trust's consultation document.

RN0H's unique role in the NHS

RNOH has established its niche within the NHS specialising in the treatment of patients with musculoskeletal disease or disability with a particular emphasis on complex operations being carried out in high volumes thereby achieving good outcomes for patients. Infection rates are very low within RNOH and patient satisfaction is high. The hospital intends to strengthen its role in meeting the needs of patients who cannot be treated elsewhere by becoming an NHS Foundation Trust.

Membership

RNOH is currently recruiting members from the local community and more widely from people who may have been patients in the past or maybe patients in the future, who are interested in supporting the hospital. We aim to have several thousand members recruited within the next few months. Members will be kept up-to-date on developments within the hospital and also invited to vote for governors who will then meet up to four times each year and will ensure that the managers of the hospital uphold the vision and values that we have set for the organisation.

In this way the managers of the hospital will be held accountable to the governors and through them to the wider membership for how the hospital is run and for its future direction and progress.

Partner organisations

The London Borough of Harrow is a key partner for RNOH and our intention is that at least one of our governors comes from the local authority.

Becoming an NHS Foundation Trust is a fantastic opportunity for the hospital to gain greater control over its future and to be more accountable to its community. It is hoped that the London Borough of Harrow and particularly the 'overview and scrutiny committee' will support the application.

Andrew Woodhead, Chief Executive. [Aug 2007]

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Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	6th September 2007
Subject:	Developing the Scrutiny Work Programme
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Paul Najsarek
	Director, People, Performance and Policy
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report makes a number of proposals regarding the disposal of items outstanding from the work programmes of the previous scrutiny committees. It also seeks authorisation from the Overview and Scrutiny committee to begin discussions with the Lead Policy and Performance members, portfolio holders, the council's senior management and partners to identify those issues that they would like to see included in the scrutiny work programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Councillors are asked to:
i   Consider the proposals with regard to the disposal of existing items on the scrutiny work programme as outlined in Appendix One
ii.   Identify early priorities from those included in Appendix One
iii.   Authorise the scrutiny team to begin consultation on the development of the work programme for the next year – 18 months
iv.   Call for a further report to the October meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny committee to agree the work programme which will be drawn from the long list of projects incorporating the priorities identified this evening and those projects identified during consultation
v.   Agree the continuation of the Standing Scrutiny Review of NHS Finances and Part Two of the review of cultural services (the Beacon project}
vi.   Agree to the establishment of the standing review of the budget

SECTION 2 - REPORT

Brief Background

With the reconfiguration of the scrutiny committees and the consequent loss of the service based focus of the sub committees, councillors will need to reach a conclusion as to how outstanding issues still included on the work programmes of these committees and those items considered on a regular basis (statutory reports) will be dealt with. This report includes as Appendix One proposals from the scrutiny team as to how these projects might be addressed. Issues agreed as priorities will be taken forward and included in the 'long list' of projects from which the final work programme for the next 12 – 18 months will be devised.

In developing this long list, it is proposed, that, as in previous years, portfolio holders, senior managers and partners are consulted and asked for their comments on issues they feel should be included in the long list. In this way it is anticipated that scrutiny will be adding value to the service improvement process by focussing on the highest priorities for the council and not duplicating work being undertaken in other ways. It is hoped that in the future development of the work programme, scrutiny councillors will be able to select or be commissioned to undertake projects from the council's improvement programme.

As a guide to councillors in considering the proposals for disposal of the existing items and to assist in identifying the priority projects for inclusion in the future work programme, the following criteria are proposed. These are a reiteration of the criteria included in the Scrutiny Principles and Protocols document agreed in September 2005. They have been slightly enhanced to reflect the need for emerging issues to be addressed and the need for the council to consider longer-term financial performance. The criteria are:

1. Poor performance – Best Value Performance Indicators, Local Area Agreement scorecard
2. High cost, poor performance, poor satisfaction – Value For Money indicators
3. Corporate priority
4. Policy development
5. Response to regional/national development
6. Statutory duty to investigate – NHS reconfigurations, Annual Health Checks
7. Emerging issue:
   ❖ A particular concern to residents (residents surveys/consultation exercises) not necessarily solely within the remit of the council
   ❖ In-year request for investigation by either senior officers or cabinet as a problematic area
   ❖ Result of a community call for action
   ❖ Source of a high level of complaints
8. Potential to deliver long-term financial benefits to the organisation

It is also suggested that an overriding criteria for considering whether or not a topic should be included on the scrutiny work programme is the likelihood of the project *actually* delivering change.

In order to address some of the priority projects identified in the previous work programme, councillors are also asked to agree to the continuation of the Standing Scrutiny Review of NHS Finance and Phase Two of the cultural services review. It is anticipated that a final report from the Standing Scrutiny Review of NHS Finances will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee towards the end of the year as this group's deliberations draw to a close. Phase Two of the cultural services review comprises an investigation of projects designed to increase involvement in cultural activities following the opening of the Beacon Centre on the Rayners Lane estate.

A key project undertaken for the first time last year was a challenge panel to investigate the robustness of the budget making process. It is widely acknowledged that scrutiny has a key role to play in examining the budget and that previous consideration of proposals as an item on a packed committee agenda was not an effective way of undertaking this examination. However, it was also apparent after last year's challenge panel that the panel similarly did not provide sufficient time for examination. As such it was proposed that a standing review of the budget making process should be established which would meet at a number of times throughout the year. Councillors are asked to agree to the establishment of this panel, in order that preparation for the examination of this year's budget can begin as soon as possible.

Issue to be determined
Councillors are asked to agree proposals for the development of the scrutiny work programme

Options considered (statutory requirement for Executive-side reports)
Not applicable.

Option recommended and reasons for recommendation
Not applicable.

Resources, costs and risks associated with recommendation
Development of a targeted, prioritised and integrated work programme is key to successful scrutiny.

Staffing/workforce consideration
There are none specific to this report.

Equalities Impact consideration
There are none specific to this report.

Scrutiny performance management issues
There are none specific to this report.

Current KPI's and Likely impact of decision on KPI's
By focussing on those areas of highest priority to the council, it is anticipated that the scrutiny function will help to make a positive impact on the KPIs.

Legal and Financial Comments
Statutory plans are referred to the committee in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure rules – 3 (e).

There are no financial comments.

Community Safety (s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998)
There are none specific to this report

Recommendations matrix attached as appropriate

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Chief Finance Officer	✓	Name Hasina Shah
		Date: 28th August 2007
Monitoring Officer	✓	Name: Jill Travers
		Date: 28th August 2007

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact: Lynne McAdam, Service Manager Scrutiny, 020 8420 9387

Background Papers*:*   None

IF APPROPRIATE, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES
3.	Manifesto Pledge Reference Number	NO

APPENDIX ONE. DISPOSAL OF EXISTING SCRUTINY PROJECTS – PROPOSALS

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
1.	Year Ahead Statement	Yes	Q&A with Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Executive – with other current issues	Annually July	3, 4	
2.	Corporate plan	Yes	Q&A with Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Executive – with other current issues	Annually December	3, 4	
3.	Community plan	Yes – statutory plan	As part of the partnership session **OR** Challenge panel	As part of the refresh	3, 4	The plan will be refreshed as the new LAA is agreed.
4.	Directorate Service Improvement plans	Yes – part of the planning cycle	Q&A with Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Executive		3, 4	
5.	Budget	Yes	Standing review to consider longer term financial planning Also through Q&A on corporate plan/corporate improvement plans	Biannually	1, 2, 3, 4	
6.	Standing review of NHS finance	Yes	Continue O&S standing review	Underway	1, 2, 5, 8	Impact of resourcing cuts in NHS and social care
7.	Statutory plans: • Children and Young People Plan • Local Development Framework • Local Implementation plan • Crime and Drugs	Yes	Challenge panels or items at committee	As required	4	

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	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
	Reduction strategy • Youth Justice Plan • Licensing Authority Policy Statement • Rights of Way Improvement Plans and Strategies					
8.	Continuation of demography review	Yes	In depth review	As soon as possible	2, 4, 8	Key piece of work which can support the council's financial position
9.	Voluntary Sector Programme • Developing a strategic relationship with the sector • Future role/purpose of grant funding • Increasing the voluntary sector's capacity	Yes	In depth review		2, 4, 8	
10.	Procurement	Yes – and see other comments re potential lines of enquiry	In depth review	TBC	8	General review of procurement (incl SLAs) has been popular amongst members for some time. Renegotiation of the social care contracts as a case study
11.	Better Care Without Delay	**IF** any proposals are forthcoming	Dependent upon proposals	If necessary	5, 6	Statutory duty to consult on substantial variations to service provision. Consultation has been affected by the wider NHS strategy by NHS London.

	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
12.	NW London NHS Strategy	Yes	Membership of pan-London joint committee Possible further LTR /joint committee locally dependents upon proposals		5, 6	Consider implications for healthcare in Harrow
13.	RNOH – foundation trust status	Yes	Visit (also with P&F) Report to committee	September	5, 6	
14.	RNOH – SHA proposals	Yes – if proposals are forthcoming	LTR	As necessary	5, 6	RNOH is anticipating proposals for closure of the hospital from the SHA. The O&S committee will wish to respond to any proposals.
15.	Participation in sports – Beacon Centre work	Yes	LTR		1, 2, 3	To incorporate consideration of use of the leisure card
16.	Obesity review	Yes	Challenge panel	Autumn 2007	1, 4	1) Links between adult obesity and diabetes 2) Children's opportunities for physical play
17.	Sports on more doorsteps (Corporate Plan, flagship action 8.3)	Yes – though need to ensure that any investigation is co-ordinated with Corporate Leadership Group (CLG) Corporate Strategy Board (CSB) as commissioners of the council's improvement programme	Challenge panel	TBC	1, 2, 3	New sports centres – where, when, why, how much being spent, user groups, timescales
18.	Community Engagement Development & Cohesion Strategies	Yes	Challenge panels	As necessary	3, 4	

	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
19.	Children's Centres	If a decision has not been made as to the future roll out of children's centres then the lessons learnt from the current programme would be useful.	Challenge panel	TBC	4	Use learning from existing projects to inform roll-out of future centres
20.	Town centre redevelopment	Yes	Challenge panel to address policy follow up through formal monitoring – standing review?	TBC	1, 2, 3, 4	
21.	Partnership	Yes	In depth review	TBC	1, 4, 8	There have been a number of issues highlighted regarding partnership arrangements - TfL. This is becoming an increasing important issue given changes to the LAA. But there would need to be an appropriate focus
22.	Future of Schools	Yes	Challenge panel to consider proposals for future development of the extended schools	TBC	3	This was originally proposed as an in-depth review
23.	Equalities self-assessment	Yes	Item on committee	TBC	1, 3	
24.	Adult Social Care	Yes	Item on committee			The impact of the changes to the Fair Access to Care criteria should be monitored at the committee. It is proposed that an update is provided to the committee in November.

PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE

	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
25.	Public realm infrastructure	Yes	AccordMP challenge panel	Autumn 2007	8	
26.	A new start for Wealdstone (Corporate Plan, flagship action 3.3)	Yes	Challenge panel	TBC	2, 3	The decision to re-open Wealdstone High Road is expected to deliver benefits to the local community and traders. A review of the impact this has had would need to take place some time after the project has had time to begin to make a difference.
27.	Access Harrow – inspection preparation	Yes	Challenge panel	Autumn/winter 2007 if agreed		Support for the service in preparing for its Audit Commission inspection – could include challenge panel to consider the self-assessment.
28.	The wait for the plumber is over (Corporate Plan, flagship action 1.4) Kier	Yes	Via the monthly meetings of P&F chairman/vice chairman with possibility for escalation to P&F if performance dictates	Monthly	1, 3	Although the Kier contract is new, residents' feedback is that appointments are not being kept
29.	Challenged children – a focus for Harrow (Corporate Plan, flagship action 7.1)	Yes	Via the monthly meetings of P&F chairman/vice chairman with possibility for escalation to P&F if performance dictates	Monthly	1, 3	The additional pupil referral unit and the reasons behind the need for this. Relate to the figures on exclusions
30.	Housing (BVPI)	Yes	Via the monthly meetings of P&F chairman/vice chairman with possibility for escalation to P&F if performance dictates	Monthly	1	A lot of 'reds' in performance data
31.	Litter (BVPI)	Yes	Via the monthly meetings of P&F	Monthly	1	

	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
			chairman/vice chairman with possibility for escalation to P&F if performance dictates			
32.	Sickness absenteeism (BVPI 12)	Yes	Via the monthly meetings of P&F chairman/vice chairman with possibility for escalation to P&F if performance dictates	Monthly	1	Follow up, also as it was addressed in the MMR review – as the process came to an end, would expect to see figures for sickness come down
33.	Impact of budgetary constraints on performance	Yes	Via the monthly meetings of P&F chairman/vice chairman with escalation to P&F if performance dictates	Monthly	1, 2	E.g. litter – how effective are the neighbourhood 'weeks of action'
34.	Northwick Park Hospital Maternity action plan	Yes	At P&F committee		1, 2	
35.	• Children's Services APA • JAR action plan • Corporate assessment action plan • VFM • MORI results • Inspection outcomes and updates • Review outcomes • Residents' Panel report •	P&F O&S for children/education issues	At P&F committee (possibly prior consideration at monthly meeting O&S education	As published - annually	1, 2	
36.	Strategic	Yes	Pick up as part of		1, 2	Primarily an issue of

	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
	objectives for community cohesion		work examining LAA performance			performance (targets set within the LAA), also partnership working. Originally intended to be Q&A with block leads. [EH] P&F issue – monthly meetings, but possibly something for the leads to pick up as well.
37.	BTP	Yes	Via the monthly meetings of P&F chairman/vice chairman with possibility for escalation to P&F if performance dictates	Monthly	8	
38.	LAA	Yes	Via the monthly meetings of P&F chairman/vice chairman with possibility for escalation to P&F if performance dictates	Monthly	1, 2	

CROSS COMMITTEE ISSUES

	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
39.	Declarations for Healthcare Commission ('annual health checks')	Yes	LTR comprising O&S and P&F to combine intelligence of the 2 committees	March – April annually	6	Responsibility on NHS to consult. Scrutiny can only comment on the core standards where it has gathered evidence to substantiate its comments and is not obligated to respond.
40.	• Children's Services Annual Performance Appraisal an • JAR action plan	P&F O&S for children/education issues	At P&F committee (possibly prior consideration at monthly meeting O&S education	As published - annually	1, 2	
41.	Energy use	Possibly	Link to the council's delivery of the decent homes standard – via P&F O&S Challenge panel – how effectively is the council delivering on the principles of the Nottingham Agreement	TBC	3, 5, 8	Scope already drafted. Affordable warmth as line of enquiry
42.	School exclusions	Yes	P&F and O&S meetings	TBC	1	

ISSUES NOT TO BE CONSIDERED

	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
43.	Governance arrangements around SLAs	No Do not undertake as a specific piece of work				The cultural services review and Arts Culture Harrow challenge panel raised a number of issues regarding SLAs and contracts – measure contracts against principles of best practice and how the council contracts with the voluntary sector. This piece of work could fall between consideration of procurement processes, partnerships and the voluntary sector and will be picked up by one of these.
44.	Changes to call-in procedures	No				A year after the implementation of the new call-in procedures, analyse the impact on public engagement. It is not clear that this is an appropriate topic for scrutiny investigation.
45.	Member allowances	No				As part of lobbying London Councils to set standard levels of member allowances. Harrow currently has below average basic allowance. It is not clear that this is an appropriate topic for scrutiny investigation.
46.	Schools budgets	No				There is nothing that the council can do about this
47.	Provision for children on the autistic spectrum	No				This should be a briefing for leads
48.	Relationship with TfL	No – though could be included in a review of 'the effectiveness of partnership working'				

	TOPIC / ISSUE	ADDRESS	HOW	WHEN	CRITERIA	NOTES
49.	Adult and community learning (VFM issues)	No – this doesn't meet any of the criteria and it was considered a couple of years ago				
50.	Alcohol Strategy	No especially not if already implemented – waste of limited time				Final strategy.
51.	Affordable warmth	Only if as a line in the Energy Use proposal – linked to the decent homes standard				Part of anti-poverty programme of work.
52.	Crime and Disorder Act review	No this is for member development/briefing for leads				
53.	Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act	No this is for member development/briefing for leads				
54.	Corporate governance	No – likely to be transferred to the Audit Committee				
55.	Olympics	No – unless there is an action plan which could be monitored via P&F				
56.	Strategy for People	No – it's a completed document so there is little point				
57.	LABGI	No – the government has announced proposals to change LABGI.			8	The Director of finance has advised that given the proposed changes in LABGI there is little that scrutiny can add at this point in time
58.	Traffic Management	No – this is an area over which the council has little control.				This was an item included in last year's work programme but no work was undertaken on it

Harrow COUNCIL
LONDON

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	6th September 2007
Subject:	Reconfiguring Scrutiny – An Update
Key Decision:	No
Responsible Officer:	Paul Najsarek Director, People, Performance and Policy
Portfolio Holder:	
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1   This report updates councillors on the implementation of the reconfiguration of the council's scrutiny function as agreed at Full Council on 12th July 2007

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Councillors are asked to:
(i)   Agree the programme of activity and associated proposals made in order to deliver a successful reconfiguration of scrutiny:
- Role of lead members
- Linking into the Integrated Planning, Budgeting and Performance Management Framework
- Programme of meetings to support the committees
- Member development programme
- Proposals for communicating the changes
- Proposals for monitoring the changes

SECTION 2 - REPORT

2.   **Brief Background**

2.1   On 12th July 2007, Full Council agreed to reconfigure the scrutiny function to include:
- An Overview and Scrutiny committee
- A Performance and Finance sub committee
- Lead Policy and Performance scrutiny councillors

2.2   In order to implement the proposed changes, the scrutiny team has undertaken a number of projects during the summer months and this report outlines the outcome of these projects. The report covers the following issues:
- Role of the Lead Policy and Performance councillors
- Developing the work programme
- Linking the scrutiny process into the council's Integrated Planning, Budgeting & Performance Management Framework
- Supporting the committees
- Member development
- Communicating the changes
- Monitoring the changes

2.3   A key driver of the reconfiguration has been the need to add value to existing council structures by ensuring that scrutiny activity is focussed on the issues of the highest priority for the council and residents and where a tangible difference can be made. To fail to demonstrate this value will leave the function at the margins of the council's drive to deliver real service improvements to local people.

2.4   The paragraphs below outline activity taken or proposed. Further information is attached as appendices

Role of Lead Policy and Performance councillors

2.5   In July, Full Council agreed that Policy and Performance Leads would be nominated for the following areas:
- Adult Health and Social Care
- Children and Young People
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Sustainable Development and Enterprise
- Corporate Effectiveness

2.6   The appointment of Lead Policy and Performance councillors was seen as critical to the reconfiguration in order to ensure that the expertise that the service specific sub committees had developed could be safeguarded. The specific areas reflect the remits of the previous committees and were loosely based on the Local Area Agreement blocks to ensure that scrutiny continues to have an outward focus. The Lead Policy councillors were nominated from the Overview and Scrutiny committee and the Lead Performance councillors were nominated from the Performance and Finance sub committee.

2.7   It is envisaged that the Lead Members will have three significant areas of responsibility:
- **To keep a watching brief on developments in their particular areas – supported by council officers/scrutiny team**. To ensure that scrutiny is able to maintain an oversight of policy developments and that when issues are raised with the Lead Members, they have a frame of reference against which to measure their importance and are thus able to make effective recommendations as to how the issues should be dealt with. The relevant service officers – from both the council and our partners – will be asked to provide councillors with information about policy changes and developments in their appropriate areas. They will also be asked to provide an early warning of potential issues of interest to the committees. The scrutiny officers will also provide regular policy updates. These briefings will be joint – to the policy and performance leads and each will then be able to provide advice to their respective committee. Briefing papers and any action sheets used in the briefings will be made available on the council's website

- **To ensure there are clear lines of communication between the O&S and P&F committees.** As both committees now have a cross-cutting focus, the role of the Lead members in ensuring that matters raised on each are discussed in a specialised forum means that some of the particular performance issues or more fundamental policy development can be addressed jointly and that each committee can be kept appraised of developments.
- **To provide a joint gateway into the system by making recommendations to the committees**. One of the key issues of concern raised during the reconfiguration was how partners, officers and residents with a particular concern could raise these with scrutiny if the sub committee structure was no longer available. It is envisaged that the lead policy and performance members will provide a more than adequate gateway for enquiries and will in fact formalise and make more transparent arrangements that existed under the old structure. The chairman and vice chairman under the previous structure were generally the point of first contact for people with an issue they wished to raise and they advised contacts as to how to pursue their concern. The new structure formalises this arrangement by publicly identifying the policy and performance leads as the point of first contact and then ensuring that the recommendations that they make regarding how a particular issue should be addressed are formally and publicly reported. Issues raised and recommendations made by the policy and performance lead councillors at each joint policy and performance briefing will be reported to both the Overview and Scrutiny committee and the Performance and Finance sub committee and published, as part of the committee papers on the Internet. The leads can choose to:
  - Proceed no further with an issue – if it is not a priority for the council or is something that it is unlikely that scrutiny intervention could assist
  - Monitor the issue either via the ¼ly briefings or via correspondence – if the issue is a priority for the council and is something to which the joint leads feel scrutiny could make a positive contribution
  - Refer the issue to the Overview and Scrutiny committee with a recommendation that either the Performance and Finance sub committee or the Overview and Scrutiny committee itself considers the matter in further detail.

2.8 The Lead members will as far as possible work collaboratively in a non-partisan environment and will be supported in their 'decision-making' process by their respective committees.

Developing the work programme

2.9 Scrutiny has been evolving over the last 18 months. In May 2006, committee agreed to pilot new methodologies in response to the growing awareness of the need to improve the challenge that scrutiny brought to the issues it was considering. Challenge panels, light touch reviews and standing reviews have made a positive contribution to the very limited options previously available to scrutiny, which saw issues addressed either as in depth reviews or as items/reports on committee agendas. The reconfiguration, and reduction in the number of committees and the number of items tabled at these committees, is an extension of this thinking in that it recognises that committees are not the most effective means of providing challenge and that therefore the number of committees and their purpose should change. This could mean that rather than being the primary location of challenge, the committees become the forum for public accountability regarding the work that has been undertaken and the commissioning and reporting of outcomes. This does not of course preclude the committees from receiving reports at committee but shifts the focus for investigation to what the pilots of the new methodologies have suggested are more appropriate fora for challenge. In beginning the development of the work programme, the scrutiny team has looked at the range of projects either traditionally considered at committee (statutory reports) or the existing/proposed projects included as part of the previous committees' work programmes and has made proposals as to how these might be dealt with.

2.10 In developing the work programme, councillors should also bear in mind that the resources available to scrutiny must be directed at those areas of the highest priority for the council/partners/residents, where a real improvement is possible and where other activity

will not be duplicated. It is proposed that projects to be included in the work programme should, if not referrals from either the Lead members or the Performance and Finance sub committee, be selected from the Council's Improvement Programme. To fail to direct the reduced resources in this way will mean that scrutiny is not adding value to the council's existing improvement processes – we must be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the contribution that is being made to the lives of local people. Whilst scrutiny must remain independent and have the freedom to direct its investigation where it feels most appropriate, it must do this with a clear view as to where the most useful use of resources might be made. This prioritisation, coupled with the improved methodologies and a more strategic committee structure can mean that scrutiny in Harrow becomes sharper, more proportionate and more effective in its deliberations.

2.11   With this in mind, the previously agreed criteria for the identification of scrutiny projects are re-iterated. These were included in the Scrutiny Principles and Protocols document agreed in September 2005. They have been slightly enhanced to reflect the need for emerging issues to be addressed and the need for the council to consider longer-term financial performance. The following are the criteria against which it is proposed that issues will be measured in order to determine whether or not they are included in the scrutiny work programme and the priority they are given:
- Poor performance – Best Value Performance Indicators, Local Area Agreement scorecard
- High cost, poor performance, poor satisfaction – Value For Money indicators
- Corporate priority
- Policy development
- Response to regional/national development
- Statutory duty to investigate – NHS reconfigurations, Annual Health Checks
- Emerging issue:
  - ❖ A particular concern to residents (residents surveys/consultation exercises) not necessarily solely within the remit of the council
  - ❖ In-year request for investigation by either senior officers or cabinet as a problematic area
  - ❖ Result of a community call for action
  - ❖ Source of a high level of complaints
- Potential to deliver long-term financial benefits to the organisation

2.12   It is also suggested that an overriding criteria for considering whether or not a topic should be included on the scrutiny work programme is the likelihood of the project *actually* delivering change.

Linking scrutiny into the council's Integrated Planning, Budgeting and Performance Management Framework
2.13   A key driver of the structural change has been the need to add value to the council's service improvement process and improve constructive challenge. This makes scrutiny's integration into the council-wide 'Integrated Planning, Budgeting and Performance Management Framework an imperative. Over the last few months the council has been reconsidering its service and budget planning and performance management processes and has streamlined activities in order to ensure that the council has a single, effective process with a clear and appropriate timetable. Also during this time and with an eye to how the reconfigured scrutiny structure can be integrated into the new process, the scrutiny team has worked with colleagues to ensure that the previously haphazard engagement of scrutiny in the service and budget planning is more integrated into the council's processes. A calendar identifying key dates in the process is currently under development.

2.14   In essence it is proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny plays a role in challenging the service planning process at two key points in the process:
The Year Ahead Statement – which provides a mid-year analysis of the council's performance and priorities and forms the backdrop against which the Corporate Plan and Directorate Service Improvement plans are developed. It is suggested that this Year Ahead Statement – produced in July – forms a key part of the Question and Answer sessions with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Chief Executive in July.

Draft Corporate Plan – which is the annual statement of the council's priorities for the forthcoming year. Again it is suggested that the draft plan forms a key part of the Question and Answer session with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Chief Executive in December.

2.15 Using each of these sessions, the Overview and Scrutiny committee will be able to consider the performance of the council in the achievement of its previous corporate objectives and challenge proposals being made with regard to future activity. This of course does not preclude other issues being raised with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Chief Executive at the question and answer sessions.

2.16 It is proposed that question and answer sessions with the portfolio holders are held throughout the year at appropriately themed meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny committee. For example, it is suggested that the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny committee in October, which has been designated as one which will focus on education matters, and which will receive the education performance results, should also host a question and answer session with the portfolio holders for Children Services and for Schools and Children's Development. The scrutiny team will undertake further work in this area to ensure that the committee's work programme is effectively timetabled to enable this 'themeing' to take place.

2.17 The Performance and Finance sub committee has already considered detailed protocols as to how it will work, in particular the consideration of performance information. In addition to this it is also proposed that information from the Improvement Boards that will be held quarterly for each Directorate to consider a wide range of performance information including scorecards, financial and risk information, performance of projects included in the Council's Improvement Programme and the delivery of inspection action plans, will be considered by the Performance and Finance sub committee. Councillors might like to note that it is also proposed that the Improvement Boards will be provided with information on each directorate's engagement in scrutiny projects and progress on implementation of recommendations from these reviews – in this way it is anticipated that the improvement proposals from scrutiny can be integrated into not only scrutiny's own monitoring processes but also into the council's corporate processes.

2.18 To further improve the integration of scrutiny into the service improvement and performance management process and to improve the engagement between scrutiny and the Executive, quarterly meetings between the chairman and vice chairman of Overview and Scrutiny and the Leader, Deputy Leader and Chief Executive are proposed at which scrutiny projects and emerging issues can be discussed to ensure there are 'no surprises' in the delivery of the scrutiny function.

Supporting the committees

2.19 A key to the effectiveness of the new structure will be the support that councillors and committees receive to deliver it. Paragraphs above have outlined how it is proposed that the lead members for policy and performance will be supported to deliver their responsibilities. This section deals with issues such as agenda planning, Chairmen and Vice Chairmen briefings and joint meetings of the chairmen and vice chairmen of each of the committees. It also briefs members on the support that the scrutiny team will provide.

2.20 As a new committee, the Performance and Finance sub committee has now agreed its protocols for agenda planning and have included in this, in addition to the ¼ly meetings of the sub committee, monthly meetings of the chairman and vice chairman. These meetings will be supported by the scrutiny team and officers from the Corporate Performance Improvement Team and will consider a wide range of performance information from which to determine the 'by exception' issues that should be considered formally at the ¼ly meeting of the committee – criteria for determining what constitutes 'by exception' are currently being developed. All deliberations at the monthly meetings will also be reported to the formal ¼ly meetings and decisions and actions will be published on the Internet.

2.21 Agenda planning meetings for the Overview and Scrutiny committee are a well-established part of the scrutiny process. However the increased number of Overview and Scrutiny committee meetings mean that an early plan of which items are presented to which committee would be a useful innovation – providing space sufficient space is left in each for urgent/emerging items. Early planning would also ensure that members' time at committee might most effectively be used and also might identify any meetings, which although scheduled, are no longer required. The agenda planning meetings between the Chairman and Vice Chairman will continue and will also undertake consideration of referrals from the Performance and Finance sub committee and items referred from any of the joint meetings of the lead policy and performance members. The Chairman and Vice Chairman will report their recommendations with regard to the disposal of items referred for consideration to the Overview and Scrutiny committee. It is proposed that planning meetings are held quarterly and plan agendas for a number of forthcoming meetings. It is also proposed that were an education or health meeting falls in the period being prepared for, that the Lead Policy and Performance members for Children and Young People or Adult Health and Social Care are invited to these meetings.

2.22 It is also proposed that there should be bi-annual meetings between the Chairmen and Vice Chairman of both committees and the Lead Policy and Performance members in order to ensure that there is more formal co-ordination and communication between the two committees. These will be timetabled to link in to the Q&A sessions.

2.23 If all of these arrangements are agreed then consultation will begin to schedule dates into councillors' diaries.

2.24 The reconfiguration of the scrutiny function has so far only been considered in the context of structural change and the implications for councillors. Clearly, there are also considerable implications for the roles of the scrutiny team, and indeed other officers across the council, in supporting the function. As has been made clear since early discussions on the reconfiguration, the resource constraints being experienced by the council have triggered an examination of all of the functions it undertakes and this has to a large part resulted in the changes agreed. Not only must the scrutiny team itself now operate with a reduced budget and thus tailor its activities so as to use available resources as effectively as possible, but also the other officers across the council who have in the past supported the scrutiny function have also been required to examine their activities. This gives greater impetus to the need for scrutiny to target its activities at those issues of the highest priority for the council and local people and ensure that its methodologies are the most appropriate to deliver effective challenge in the most efficient way. With regard to the wider pool of officers, the targeted work programme and use of new methodologies should ensure that the best use is made of their time. With regard to the scrutiny team, our primary function remains the support of scrutiny members. Significant officer resources have been lost from the team (1 part time scrutiny officer, 1 full time student placement and the administrative officer post is now shared) and this has meant that the old committee structure would have considerably stretched the resources available to the team. In considering how to organise ourselves we have distributed responsibilities as follows:

Support to Overview and Scrutiny   Heather Smith, Lynne McAdam

Support to Performance and Finance   Ed Hammond, Nahreen Matlib

Co-ordination between Overview and Scrutiny and Performance and Finance	Nahreen Matlib
Strategic positioning of the scrutiny function (internally and externally)	Lynne McAdam
Support for Adult Health and Social Care Policy and Performance Leads	Nahreen Matlib
Support for Children and Young People Policy and Performance Leads	Heather Smith
Support for Sustainable Development and Enterprise and Safer and Stronger Communities Policy and Performance Leads	Ed Hammond
Support for Corporate Effectiveness Policy and Performance Leads	Lynne McAdam

2.25 It is anticipated that specific review projects will not necessarily be allocated to team members in line with their service speciality as it may well be the case that, if councillors follow the logic of only considering those matters of the highest priority, some service areas may not generate a review/project in their particular area. Projects will be allocated in accordance with officer capacity and, subject to comments made above, expertise.

Member Development

2.26 The changes in scrutiny structures will require a shift in the approach that members take to scrutiny. In particular, the changes will require members and officers to work in a more strategic, streamlined way, and to work without recourse to service-based committees. Whilst the basic skill set remains the same, the process will mean that councillors will need to operate in a different way than they have before. As such the scrutiny team has devised a *MANDATORY* training programme to run from the autumn. It has 3 distinct components:

- General introduction for all councillors
- Specific briefings for scrutiny councillors and reserves
- Performance management training for members of the Performance and Finance sub committee.

Full details of the training are provided in Appendix One.

Communicating the changes

2.27 A number of actions are planned or have taken place to ensure that information about the changes to scrutiny is widely disseminated across the council and to our stakeholders.

- The restructuring is the main item in the summer issue of the scrutiny newsletter, which is circulated to all councillors and to the council's senior management.
- The scrutiny team is preparing an article for inclusion in the council's quarterly policy bulletin. This is circulated to all officers who are members of the Policy Development Network, a pan-council officer network.
- All stakeholders were advised of the initial decision to reconfigure in April and this will be augmented by a further letter from the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny advising how the scrutiny function can be accessed in future
- The scrutiny website includes details of the changes
- Details of the changes were presented to the Corporate Management Team in July, following the decision of Full Council
- Negotiations are underway for a presentation to be made to the council's top 200 managers at the next managers' conference on 4th September – hopefully by either the Chief Executive or the Corporate Director Strategy and Business Support.

2.28 In order to facilitate the transition and to ensure that lines of communication are effective between the executive and scrutiny, ¼ly meetings between the Leader, Deputy Leader, Chief Executive and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of scrutiny have been established. It is anticipated that these meetings will enable progress on existing projects to be shared and emerging issues on which the Executive would value the support of scrutiny to be identified. .

Monitoring the changes

2.29 This is a significant change for scrutiny and many councillors have expressed their concerns that the impact of the change is monitored on an ongoing basis and formally reviewed and reported to committee after 6 months. The following are some of the areas that will be monitored to assess the success or otherwise of the reconfiguration:

- Projects undertaken/completed
- Number of items on committee
- Number of committees meetings held
- Support for the Lead members – quality and quantity
- Remit of the Lead members – does this need to change
- Number of issues escalating and reasons why/why not
- Impact of escalation on capacity of scrutiny
- Effectiveness of gate keeping/work programme criteria/by exception criteria
- Pressure on team time

3. **Issue to be determined**
3.1 Members are asked to comment upon/approve proposals identified to implement the reconfigured scrutiny function.

4. **Options considered (statutory requirement for Executive-side reports)**
4.1 Not applicable.

5. **Option recommended and reasons for recommendation**
5.1 Not applicable.

6. **Resources, costs and risks associated with recommendation**
6.1 One of the key drivers for the reconfiguration of scrutiny has been the need to address the reduction in budget available to the function itself and also across the council in supporting scrutiny projects. If a more proportionate, targeted scrutiny function is not successfully implemented it will fail to add value to the council's service improvement processes and could then run the risk of further budget reduction.

7. **Staffing/workforce consideration**
7.1 By reconfiguring, the limited staffing resource available to scrutiny itself and across the council will be more effectively focussed.

8. **Equalities Impact consideration**
8.1 There are none specific to this report

9. **Scrutiny performance management issues**
9.1 The scrutiny team will closely monitor the impact of the reconfiguration on the effectiveness of the scrutiny function.

10. **Current KPI's and Likely impact of decision on KPI's**
10.1 By focussing on those areas of highest priority to the council and integrating more effectively with the service improvement function, it is anticipated that the reconfigured scrutiny function will help to make a positive impact on the KPIs.

11. **Legal and Financial Comments**
11.1 There are no legal or financial comments on this report

12. **Community Safety (s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998)**
12.1 There are none specific to this report

Recommendations matrix attached as appropriate

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Chief Finance Officer	✓	Name: Hasina Shah
		Date: 28th August 2007
Monitoring Officer	✓	Name: Jill Travers
		Date: 28th August 2007

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact: Lynne McAdam, Service Manager Scrutiny, 020 8420 9387
Background Papers*:* None

IF APPROPRIATE, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES
3.	Manifesto Pledge Reference Number	NO

APPENDIX ONE: SCRUTINY MEMBER DEVELOPMENT – DRAFT PROGRAMME 2007/08

As part of the recent reconfiguration of the scrutiny function in Harrow, members have asked that a comprehensive package of training to accompany the changes be developed. Addressing councillors' immediate training needs, this programme should allow members to:
  ➢ Familiarise themselves with the new look for scrutiny and how it operates; and
  ➢ Develop some of the key skills needed to make the new system effective

This paper presents a draft programme of scrutiny training for consideration. It suggests training for a range of audiences - scrutiny members and reserves, non-scrutiny members, co-optees and advisors to committee.

The draft programme addresses the training needs identified through the reconfiguration work in four streams of training:
  1. Generic
  2. Subject-specific
  3. Performance management
  4. Other/external opportunities

So as to make the best use of members' time, it is important that the scrutiny programme dovetails with the work of others, for example the Member Development Panel, the Corporate Performance Team and more externally the London Scrutiny Network. Therefore the programme references some of the other training opportunities offered to members by these groups.

Previous experience has shown that the success of a member development programme in part relies upon the engagement and commitment of all councillors. To this end it will be vital for scrutiny chairmen, vice-chairmen and policy/performance scrutiny leads to encourage their colleagues to attend training sessions and impress upon them the value of these development opportunities.

This paper asks members to:
  • Consider the draft scrutiny member development programme;
  • Put forward comments on the content of the programme;
  • Offer a steer on possible dates for training on which to canvass members more widely; and
  • Agree to the Scrutiny Team proceeding with the proposals as detailed in the programme.

Generic Scrutiny Training

Summary

WHAT: Event or activity	Generic scrutiny training
WHY: Aim and objectives	• To reinforce the fundamental principles of scrutiny in Harrow • To inform about the changes in scrutiny and the rationale behind this • To engage members in exploring ways to take the new look scrutiny forward • 'Smarter' scrutiny - introduction to work programming
FOR WHOM: Audience	All councillors and reserves (mandatory) and co-optees
HOW: Event details	Seminar
WHEN/WHERE: Date and venue	October (date tba – see suggested dates below) To ensure maximum uptake of this mandatory session, run the session on two occasions ➤ 3.30-5.00pm ➤ 7.00-8.30pm
BY WHOM: Organiser and deliverer	Learning and Development / Scrutiny Team
HOW MUCH: Costs and resources	In-house resources
Risks and evaluation considerations	Reinforcing the value of this mandatory training.

Additional detail

Possible dates (October) – need to identify two sessions:
- Monday 8 October (before Group meetings)
- Wednesday 10 October
- Monday 15 October (before Group meetings)
- Tuesday 16 October
- Thursday 18 October (before Council)
- Monday 29 October

Draft agenda:

Late afternoon session:	Agenda	Evening session:
3.30pm	Scrutiny in a broad context: The value added by an effective scrutiny function (presented perhaps by an external presenter e.g. CfPS, peer councillor)	7.00pm
3.50pm	Scrutiny in Harrow context: The fundamental principles of scrutiny in Harrow	7.20pm
4.10pm	Making it work: ➤ How to get involved for all members ➤ Roles and responsibilities of scrutiny policy/performance leads ➤ Methodologies to work with ➤ Smart work programming ➤ Engaging partners and the public	7.40pm
4.30pm	Meet the Scrutiny Team – and other support available to members	8.00pm
4.45pm	Q&A and general discussion	8.15pm
5.00pm	Close	8.30pm

11

Subject-Specific Briefings

<u>Summary</u>

WHAT: Event or activity	Subject-specific briefings on health and children's issues
WHY: Aim and objectives	To outline: • National /Regional policy context • Local developments /priorities • Issues for scrutiny – past work and issues on the horizon • Partnership work Plus for health: • What does healthcare look like in Harrow? Health needs and organisations (with reference to Harrow's Health Profile) • Powers of health scrutiny Plus for Children's issues: • Partnership work e.g. Children's Centres
FOR WHOM: Audience	All scrutiny councillors and reserves (mandatory) and co-optees
HOW: Event details	One event to cover all subject-specific briefings, including practical exercise
WHEN/WHERE: Date and venue	November (date tba - see suggested dates below)
BY WHOM: Organiser and deliverer	Scrutiny Team / relevant policy and performance scrutiny leads Work with colleagues in health and Children's Services
HOW MUCH: Costs and resources	In-house
Risks and evaluation considerations	Implications on external/partners' time – willingness to participate

<u>Additional detail</u>

<u>Possible dates (November):</u>
• Tuesday 6 November
• Monday 12 November
• Wednesday 14 November
• Thursday 15 November
• Tuesday 27 November

Please note that it is suggested that this session be held on one occasion only, given the implications on partners' time in delivering the session. The event will be hosted by the Scrutiny Team and facilitated by L&D colleagues.

-DRAFT-

<u>Draft agenda:</u>

	Agenda
7.00pm	Introductions and welcomes • Update on O&S including work programme • Update on P&F including work programme • Roles of members and scrutiny policy/performance leads
7.15pm	Subject briefing and Q&A: Health: ➢ National /Regional policy context ➢ Local developments /priorities ➢ Issues for scrutiny – past work and issues on the horizon ➢ Partnership working ➢ What does healthcare look like in Harrow? ➢ Powers of health scrutiny
7.45pm	Subject briefing and Q&A: Children and Young People's issues: ➢ National /Regional policy context ➢ Local developments /priorities ➢ Issues for scrutiny – past work and issues on the horizon ➢ Partnership working e.g. Children's Centres
8.15pm	Practical exercise: working through issues in the new scrutiny format - how scrutiny councillors can practically apply their roles to investigate issues.
8.40pm	Feedback and general discussion
9.00pm	Close

<u>Suggested input:</u>
• General organisation – Scrutiny Team
• Health – PCT, noting work of NW London Hospitals Trust, Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital and Central and NW London Foundation Trust
• Children's issues – Children's Services

Other resources:
• Briefing papers – the subject briefings to be accompanied by 1 page (2 sides) max briefing paper on national policy/performance issues to set the context. These will be sent out with the agenda in advance of the session.
• Centre for Public Scrutiny publications – general introductions to subject areas e.g. health scrutiny

As requested there will be a further briefing on community safety and this will be held later in the year to coincide with developments around community calls for action.

Performance Management

Summary

WHAT: Event or activity	Performance Management Workshop	Performance Management Seminar
WHY: Aim and objectives	To give members: • A comprehensive grounding in the basic skills associated with performance monitoring – including prioritisation, resource planning and finance, budgeting, weighting and the concept of "by exception" reporting. • An understanding of the importance, purpose and function of performance monitoring and management. • An understanding of the terminology and jargon used by performance management professionals. • Training on the wider implications of performance monitoring in the rest of the council, through the service planning framework.	To share good practice
FOR WHOM: Audience	For all members and reserves of Performance and Finance sub-committee	All councillors
HOW: Event details	Workshop based on training needs as identified by the Performance and Finance sub-committee at its first meeting	Seminar including case study work to think about the performance of a service
WHEN/WHERE: Date and venue	Date tba	10 September 2007, Committee Room
BY WHOM: Organiser and deliverer	Scrutiny Team / Corporate Performance Team	Ray Mallon, Mayor of Middlesborough (at request of Member Development Panel)
HOW MUCH: Costs and resources	In-house	Member Development Panel budget
Risks and evaluation considerations		

Additional detail

There will be a single scrutiny-led session, which will complement the corporate training currently being organised by Lindsey Kelham.

In advance of the session an introductory briefing will be made available consisting of an introductory guide to performance. This will contain data from CfPS and the IDeA. It will also contain a glossary of key terms.

In a two hour session, the first hour will provide a general introduction to the principles of performance management, without using the standard terminology. Performance management will be taken out of its normal context and be applied to an unconnected task – for example, managing a household budget.

The second hour will be a workshop-style exercise which will permit members to consider scorecards themselves, and make judgments on this based on "by exception" criteria. They will

also consider which questions they might ask officers to get to the bottom of issues surrounding poor performance.

After the first proper meeting of the committee (October) the process will be evaluated and future training planned if members think it necessary.

Draft agenda

Based on Saturday morning option:	Agenda	Based on evening option:
10.00am	Introduction: Chairman/Vice-Chairman to introduce the training, identifying its outcomes and setting the scene	7.00pm
10.10am	First Exercise - Prioritisation, managing performance and budgeting: An exercise to take the skills of performance management out of their context. "You have just bought a new house. It needs a lot of working doing to it. How are you going to carry out all the jobs you need to do, within the budget available, while making sure that you can renovate the house as quickly and to as high a standard as you need to?" This exercise would test skills relating to prioritisation of tasks, project management, performance management, and use of limited resources.	7.10pm
10.45am	Presentation: Service Planning Framework (Andrea Durn): To provide information for members on the service planning framework and some context on the general corporate structure into which scrutiny will fit, and how reports and feedback from bodies such as Improvement Boards will be incorporated into the process.	7.45pm
11.15am	Second Exercise - Monitoring scorecards: A practical exercise, with members looking at a set of scorecard data from Q1 2007/08 (perhaps the directorate scorecards for Community and Environment Services and for Adults and Housing). Members would be asked to: • Identify measures that fit within the suggested P&F "by exception" criteria • Identify any cross-cutting issues, or instances where there are wider implications for poor performance that extend outside a single service area • Suggest questions that might be asked of officers at a committee meeting regarding those identified performance issues. This session has two main functions - a) allow the "by exception" criteria to be subjected to a "dry run", and b) provide the groundwork for discussion of the Q1 scorecard at committee in October.	8.15pm
12.00pm	Close	9.00pm

Other / External Training Opportunities
Summary

WHAT: Event or activity	WHY: Aim and objectives	FOR WHOM: Audience	HOW: Event details	WHEN/WHERE: Date and venue	BY WHOM: Organiser and deliverer	HOW MUCH: Costs and resources	Risks and evaluation considerations
London Scrutiny Network learning events	As part of London Scrutiny Network's bid for Capital Ambition funding Learning events enable: • Learning latest developments • Sharing best practice • Strengthening cross-London working and peer support	Scrutiny councillors and officers	Learning Events: • Community call for action • Impact of the Local government and public health bill – place shaping through scrutiny • Scrutinising partnerships (LSPs and LAAs)	LB Merton / November 2007 LB Hillingdon / February 2008 LB Tower Hamlets / July 2008	Named lead authority as given	Capital Ambition funding (£54k) No cost to attend	There may be a limited number of places per authority (100 places across London for each Learning Event)
London Scrutiny Network seminars	As part of London Scrutiny Network's bid for Capital Ambition funding Seminars enable: • Discussing key challenges • Offering peer support • More effectiveness in overview and scrutiny's role in improving services • Strengthening cross-London working and peer support	Scrutiny councillors and officers	Seminars: • Scrutiny of performance management • Raising the profile of scrutiny internally • Joint authority scrutiny	LB Lambeth / July 2007 (?) LB Hounslow / September 2007 LB Havering / April 2008	Named lead authority as given	Capital Ambition funding (£54k) No cost to attend	There may be a limited number of places per authority (40 places across London for each Seminar)

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Additional detail

The London Scrutiny Network bid to Capital Ambition has only very recently been accepted and this would have a bearing on the dates originally set for the events/seminars.

Nahreen Matlib
Senior Scrutiny Officer
7 August 2007

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Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	6th September 2007
Subject:	Evidence for Accountability Project
Responsible Officer:	Paul Najsarek Director People, Performance and Policy
Portfolio Holder:	
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Briefing from the Evidence for Accountability Project

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report informs councillors of the invitation to participate in the Evidence for Accountability project

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Councillors are asked to:
  i.   Consider the terms of reference of the project
  ii. Confirm scrutiny's ongoing commitment to participate in the project

SECTION 2 - REPORT

Brief Background
In 2006, scrutiny councillors agreed to participate in the Evidence for Accountability project, being run by Kings College. This project offers scrutiny an opportunity to pilot some of the academic findings of King's College's Evidence for Accountability project, which has been established to test how effectively evidence is used to draw service conclusions. A number of high profile public sector bodies, that perform an inspection/audit/monitoring function, have been invited to participate in the project. These are:

- Audit Commission
- Health Care Commission
- House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee
- National Audit Office
- Ofsted

The project had hoped to be up and running during the spring of this year, but it was delayed whilst funding was sought. It is now hoped that the project will commence in the autumn and representatives of the project have asked for confirmation of Harrow's willingness to continue to participate.

A brief from the project team is attached as Appendix One.

Issue to be determined
Councillors are asked to confirm their willingness to continue to participate in the Evidence for Accountability project

Options considered (statutory requirement for Executive-side reports)
Not applicable

Option recommended and reasons for recommendation
Not applicable

Resources, costs and risks associated with recommendation
The council has been advised that there are no actual financial costs associated with participation in the project but that demands may be made on the time of councillors or officers through involvement in meetings or discussions with the project team. These however, are likely to be minimal and will be met from the existing budget.

Staffing/workforce consideration
There are none specific to this report

Equalities Impact consideration
There are none specific to this report

Scrutiny performance management issues
The Evidence for Accountability project offers an excellent opportunity for the robustness of our processes, particularly since the reconfiguration, to be considered by an independent body

Current KPI's and Likely impact of decision on KPI's
Not applicable

Legal and Financial Comments
None.

Community Safety (s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998)
There are none specific to this report

Recommendations matrix attached as appropriate

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Chief Finance Officer	✓	Name: Hasina Shah
		Date: 28th August 2007
Monitoring Officer	✓	Name: Jill Travers
		Date: 28th August 2007

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact: Report Author's name, Job Title, direct telephone number

Background Papers*:* List **only non-exempt** documents relied on to a material extent in preparing the report. (eg previous reports) Where possible also include electronic link.

IF APPROPRIATE, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	NO
2.	Corporate Priorities	NO
3.	Manifesto Pledge Reference Number	

<u>APPENDIX ONE</u>

The use of evidence in the audit, inspection and scrutiny functions of government: an evaluation of development projects

Proposal by the Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice, King's College London, in partnership with the Audit Commission, the Healthcare Commission, the House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, the London Borough of Harrow, the National Audit Office [*and the Office for Standards in Education*].

Background

1. Over the last decade or more there has been a great increase in the range and authority of accountability processes and functions in government. This proposal focuses on three such activities – audit, inspection and scrutiny (AIS) – that are organisationally distinct but share characteristics. Their authority relies largely on the quality of the analyses and arguments that support their assessments. Their work always has an empirical basis, drawing on various forms of evidence.

2. The Centre, which undertakes research, consultancy and training on the use of evidence in the development and delivery of public policy, is interested in these issues as a complement to its work on the executive functions of government; full details of its work are at www.evidencenetwork.org. Initially, in 2004-05, it organised a series of seminars where invited practitioners and researchers addressed successively the nature and types of evidence for AIS; methods of collecting and organising evidence; how evidence is synthesised; and the forms of output of AIS. At a final seminar, further individuals were invited to contribute their expertise and thinking to take the analysis further and consider what actions might improve the use of evidence for accountability. The report of that work is available at www.evidencenetwork.org/documents/wp24.pdf. Following the seminars, it was decided to encapsulate what had been learned in a draft 'statement of principles of evidence for accountability' that could serve as a basis for further work. These principles are annexed.

The development projects

3. The further work now proposed will involve empirically testing the principles by subjecting some real projects being undertaken by the AIS partners to an evaluation of their use of evidence. The *objectives* are:
- to explore, in partnership with AIS bodies, how evidence is used in a set of actual audit, scrutiny or inspection activities;
- to evaluate whether and how that use of evidence has contributed to the utility of the work;
- to test and, if necessary, refine the statement of principles.

4. Potentially the proposal will have three *outcomes* of value:
- For the AIS bodies involved, self-reflection upon and independent evaluation of their practice in using evidence in the development projects should improve their performance, and such changes will probably be documented and promulgated in internal guidance.
- For AIS bodies generally, the publication of the principles, in validated form, should provide a benchmark to stimulate more conscious and explicit choices in their use of evidence.

- For those interested more widely in the use of evidence in public policy and public services – including practitioners, commentators and researchers – analysis of the contribution of evidence to audit, inspection and scrutiny functions will extend the understanding hitherto derived from experience in executive functions of government.

5. Five organisations have so far agreed formally to be partners in the programme and most have identified their development projects. Discussions are progressing with Ofsted as a sixth partner.

Healthcare Commission (HC)	- Local area support (*tbc*) - Investigation project (*tbc*) - Improvement project (*tbc*) - Enforcement project (*tbc*)
National Audit Office (NAO)	- Tackling Pensioner Poverty VFM study - Another VFM study
House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee (PASC)	- Inquiry into the Ombudsman's Report on Pensions (HC 1081) - Governing the Future inquiry
London Borough of Harrow	*Under discussion*
Audit Commission	*Under discussion*
Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)	*Under discussion*

Operational responsibility for these projects rests entirely with the relevant partner's project team. The role of the KCL researchers is to observe, analyse and evaluate their use of evidence. The choice of organisations and projects is designed to cover all three functions - audit, inspection and scrutiny - and both national and local perspectives.

Research design and methods

6. An eight module design is proposed:

a. Project profiles
The KCL researchers need a fuller understanding of each project's background, genesis, objectives, methodology, and intended outputs; and also of any internal, organisational protocols or other requirements for their conduct. This will involve reading documentation and discussion with project managers and teams. From this work a profile of the purpose and methods for each development project will be prepared.
b. Observation
Where projects are current, that is, being undertaken during late 2006 to mid 2007, opportunities will be sought by the KCL researchers to observe how the project teams are handling evidence.

c. Document analysis

Each project will be documented internally by the partner's project team as it progresses through its chosen methodology. Documents might include workplans, issues papers, surveys and analyses, briefings for meetings, records of team discussions, first and later drafts of reports. Completed projects will generate published reports. The KCL researchers will read as much of this as is feasible.

d. Interviews and/or discussions

Personal contact will be sought by the KCL researchers with key players to supplement the findings from observation and documentary analysis. This will include interviews (either face to face or by phone), discussions with project team members, with senior managers and politicians overseeing the work, and perhaps with representatives of the organisations subject to audit, inspection or scrutiny.

e. Project reports

For each development project the findings from modules a, b, c and d (profiles, observation, documentary analysis, interviews/discussions) will be reported. These reports will meet the first objective in para 3 above: how evidence was used in the audit, scrutiny or inspection projects.

f. Seminars

There will be four types of seminar:

(i)   During the course of current projects, some partners may invite the KCL researchers to contribute to periodic internal seminars that the partners convene to examine their own work in progress.

(ii)   The KCL researchers will convene up to 3 seminars where the partners together can share and reflect on work in progress.

(iii) Reports on the use of evidence in each of the projects (module e) will be presented for discussion at six internal, half-day seminars in the partner organisations.

(iv)   Subsequently, there will be an all-day seminar to review the draft reports of all the projects, in which project managers will participate. External expert researchers and practitioners in AIS will also be invited to participate. The project reports will be finalised after the seminars.

g. Evaluation

The whole programme of development projects will be subject to an independent evaluation. The evaluator's remit will be to consider achievement of the second and third objectives in para 3 above: whether and how the use of evidence in the projects has contributed to the utility of the work; and whether and how the statement of principles should be refined. The project reports will be the main documentary source for the evaluation. But the evaluator will also attend the final project seminars and will interview the project report authors.

h. Final reporting

All the above will be brought together in the final report, which will comprise:

The overall independent evaluation

The individual project reports – cross-referenced to the published reports of the audit, inspection or scrutiny project

A revised statement of principles.

All information or evidence gathered or conceptual models identified during the project remains the intellectual property of individual partner organisations

Project team

7. The KCL team will be: **Dr Ruth Levitt** and **William Solesbury**, both Visiting Senior Research Fellows at the Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice the work with the development projects and prepare the project reports. **Professor Charlotte Humphrey**, Director of the Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice, King's College London, will have overall accountability for project deliverables and will provide challenge and quality assurance. **Jane Steele** will undertake the independent evaluation.

8. The **lead staff in the partner organisations** are:

Healthcare Commission	Neil Prime, Head of Analytical Support
National Audit Office	Jeremy Lonsdale, Director, Value for Money Development Team
Public Administration Select Committee	Eve Samson, Committee Clerk
Harrow Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Stanley Sheinwald, Chairman Overview and Scrutiny Committee Lynne McAdam, Team Manager Scrutiny
Audit Commission	Sally Hammond, Head of Local Government Improvement
Ofsted	*Tb*c

9. The costs of the KCL team, including the organisation of seminars and publication of reports, will be covered by a grant being sought from the Nuffield Foundation. Each of the partner organisations will bear their own costs, principally staff time.

Workplan

10. The chart below shows the proposed workplan and timetable:

Month / Module	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	2008
a. Project profiles	▓	▓											
b. Observation		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓							
c. Document analysis		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓							
d. Interviews/discussions				▓	▓	▓	▓						
e. Project reports								▓	▓				
f. Seminars		▓				▓			▓	▓			
g. Evaluation									▓	▓	▓		
h. Final report												▓	
Dissemination													▓

Centre for Evidence Based Policy and Practice, King's College London
October 2006

Annex   The draft principles of evidence for accountability (February 2006)

The necessity of evidence
1. Audit, scrutiny and inspection are mechanisms used to inform the accountability functions of government. They are second order tasks (that is, not executive tasks), empirical (based on observation and experience), and retrospective (though also potentially contributory to future improvement). For their judgments to be defensible, they should be informed by high quality evidence.

Sources of evidence

2. The quality of evidence depends on its relevance to the accountability task and its reliability, particularly in the methods used for its collection and analysis.

3. Wherever possible, audits, inspections and scrutinizes should share evidence with each other and use existing evidence rather than always collect new evidence, to minimize the burden on the services being investigated.

Diverse interests

4. The presentation of evidence and conclusions in audits, inspections and scrutinies should be geared to the interests and capacities of varied audiences – not just policy makers and programme managers but also politicians, service users and taxpayers, at national and local levels.

5. To achieve this, communicating evidence to and through the media should be integral to audit, inspection and scrutiny,

Clarity and complexity

6. However, summarizing evidence and simplifying conclusions for ease of communication runs the risk of distortion (as in rating tables). The sources on which such presentations are based, and links to where fuller accounts are available, should always be given.

Methods and skills

7. Audit, inspection and scrutiny bodies should avoid conservatism in their selection and use of evidence and instead draw on the full range of available methods and skills. This requires more learning from each other.

8. In audit, inspection and scrutiny bodies should consciously adopt methods of finding and using evidence that best fit particular tasks, differentiating between:
- measurement and observation – for example, analysing service use data or conducting user surveys, or making site visits or doing case studies;
- analysis and discourse – reasoning conclusions from evidence, or debating its meaning and importance;
- autonomy and collaboration – the investigator assessing performance independently of those being investigated, or working together with them to seek agreed assessments.

9. The audit, inspection and scrutiny bodies should develop and deploy as appropriate:

- analytical skills – for handling data, both quantitative and qualitative, to scientifically acceptable standards;
- investigative skills – in reviewing documentation, conducting interviews, observing practice;
- facilitation skills – in chairing hearings, discussions or focus groups;
- negotiation skills – for seeking consensus on evidence or conclusions;
- consultancy skills – to develop advice on improving performance;
- communication skills – to get results across to diverse audiences.

New challenges

10.   Audit, inspection and scrutiny bodies actively need to keep improving their understanding and uses of evidence in the context of demands for 'better regulation' and a 'lighter touch', as well as of new forms of service delivery, for example, through partnerships.

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