

Meeting:	ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE
Date:	17 JULY 2003
Subject:	ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2002/03
Responsible Chief Officer	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Status:	Part I
Ward:	N/A
Enclosures:	REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

1. Summary

- 1.1 In the last cycle of meetings, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Sub-Committees agreed the process by which the 2002/03 annual report should be prepared and agreed for presentation to Council. This process provided for a composite report to be produced which includes an overview of the work undertaken over the past year supported by individual contributions from each of the scrutiny bodies. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 10 July 2003 has considered and approved the annual report, which will be submitted to the next Ordinary meeting of Council. The Chair's report on this Sub-Committee's work is attached for Members' information and formal endorsement.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To note and formally endorse the Chair's report of the Sub-Committee's work over the past year, as agreed for inclusion in the 2002-03 scrutiny annual report.

3. Policy Context (including Relevant Previous Decisions)

- 3.1 This report addresses the requirement placed on the Committee to report to Council on the work done in the previous year and on its annual work programme for the forthcoming year.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 1.4.03
Sub-Committee meeting - 31.3.03

4. Relevance to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The work of scrutiny bodies seek to support all of the Council's corporate and strategic priorities.

5. Background Papers:

Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee 1.4 .03

Minutes of the meeting of this Sub-Committee held on 31.3.03

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5 ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

- 5.1 This report covers the initial year of the expanded Overview and Scrutiny Committee. We have inevitably been on a steep learning curve over the year with the consequence that progress on some of the reviews has been slower than we would have hoped. It should also be noted some of the regular reports and statutory plans such as the Local Implementation Plan and Best Value review of Planning Services were delayed and are for consideration in 2003/4. In common with all budget issues other than those affecting education matters (where there is a statutory right for voluntary aided sector and parent governor members to be involved), the Housing Revenue Account for 2003/4 was considered by the main Committee.
- 5.2 During the year we considered a number of referred issues. The removal of asbestos roofs on garages was referred to us by the Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum. The problems were examined and several recommendations were made to ensure that Health and Safety legislation is adhered to in all future Housing Department Contracts of this nature.
- 5.3 We also received a report outlining proposals to tackle empty homes in the borough and bring them back into occupation, which would form Harrow's strategy for Empty Homes. It was noted that Harrow was third best in London and that it should improve once steps had been put in place to improve performance in the Council sector. We requested that the Portfolio Holder should investigate the release of funds from council house sales for investment in housing and additional capital funds have been allocated for empty homes in 2003/04.
- 5.4 The annual report of Brent and Harrow Trading Standards was reported to us for information and noted.
- 5.5 During the year we also undertook two key areas for review, both of which are still ongoing.
- 5.6 The small working group looking at consultation undertaken on highway and transportation schemes considered the public consultation procedures for all areas of work. It agreed that the review should concentrate on Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) but also look at Cycle networks, Traffic Calming and Local Safety Schemes. It was felt that all other areas had little scope for genuine consultation. A joint meeting of the Sub-Committee and the Transport and Road Safety Advisory Panel was held on CPZs where good practice in other boroughs was noted and suggestions for improvements were identified. Meetings with residents and staff within Highways and Transportation are scheduled. Once these are completed, a report with recommendations will be drawn up and reported to the Sub-Committee at the September 2003 meeting.

- 5.7 Our second review is focused on the development of Harrow's waste management strategy. We commenced with a meeting to review policy and performance data on Harrow's Waste Management and the Mayor of London's Draft Waste Strategy. In order to obtain an overview of waste management, we decided to adopt an innovative approach and arranged for presentations on policy at National, Greater London Authority, West London Waste Authority and Harrow level to be given at a seminar by speakers from these organisations. The session proved informative and the

COMMITTEE STATISTICS	
Committee meetings	4
One off Working Group meetings	-
In-depth reviews	2
Review meetings	4
Visits/informal meetings	-
Attendance by Portfolio Holder	-
Statutory items considered	-

speakers were questioned by scrutiny and other Members. The information gathered at this seminar has led to a discussion paper which, together with the views of Harrow Agenda 21 and Council staff, will form the basis of the report and recommendations to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.

- 5.8 The first part of 2003-04 will see the completion of the reviews on Consultation on Highway Schemes and the Development of the Waste Management Strategy. In addition to this ongoing work, we are intending to consider a short report on the influence the Council has on transport providers together with a briefing note on Housing loans and grants, with a view to determining whether a full review should be undertaken on the latter.
- 5.9 We will, of course, also consider any Statutory Plans, Regular Reports and other matters referred for consideration.

Alan Blann
Chair, Environment and Economy Scrutiny Sub-Committee