



Scrutiny Communications

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Scrutiny is an independent, councillor-led function working with local people to improve services

Background



Scrutiny

- Overview and Scrutiny (10 October) considered a paper on the principles and protocols of scrutiny, which included communications
- This presentation is an update on progress made and also sets out proposals for communications for agreement by the committee.

Audiences



- Members
- Officers
- Stakeholders and service users
- Partners
- Individual members of the public
- Technical and community experts

Aims



Scrutiny

- To educate people about scrutiny, its purpose and its aims
- To invite partners/the public to suggest topics for review
- To encourage attendance at scrutiny meetings
- As a means of inviting people to become co-opted members to work on review groups

Aims (2)



Scrutiny

- As a means of engaging with experts and witnesses to help a review or committee explore particular issues and to provide evidence to a scrutiny committee
- To explain the role of the Scrutiny officer team and the service standards that others can expect

Aims (3)



Scrutiny

- To keep people up to date on scrutiny activity
- To generate dialogue about what affects how people live in Harrow
- To inform and consult members and officers in a timely and effective fashion in order to engage them in the scrutiny process

Internet



Scrutiny

- Main basis of communications:
 - Content developed as web pages but also as downloadable pdfs - the same resources can then be used in electronic or paper-based formats
- Internet v Intranet?



You are in: [Home](#) > [Council and democracy](#) > [Council departments](#) > [Scrutiny](#)

- [Home](#)
- [Council and democracy](#)
- [Council departments](#)
- [Scrutiny](#)**

Scrutiny

Welcome to scrutiny in Harrow

Scrutiny is an independent, councillor-led function working with local people to improve services.

Scrutiny acts as a check and balance on local decision making. Councillors work to identify ways to improve services for local people. When undertaking scrutiny, councillors work across party lines.

Scrutiny is carried out through a mixture of formal committee meetings and informal working groups.

This year councillors have been undertaking a wide range of projects. Topics have included:

- Hear/say - review of community engagement
- Examination of the councils middle management review (phase 2)
- Parks
- Tourism
- Redevelopment of Northwick Park Hospital (through a joint scrutiny committee with Brent and Ealing councils)
- Adult and community learning
- Reducing fear of crime

Getting involved in scrutiny in Harrow

I am a member of the public - [how can I get involved?](#)
 I am interested in taking part in a review - [how can I get involved?](#)
 How can I [suggest a topic](#) I would like scrutiny to look at?

Annual report 2004-05 published

To read about what scrutiny has been doing in Harrow read our [report](#).

For information about scrutiny committees in Harrow please see the rest of our website



- Related items**
- [How does scrutiny work in Harrow?](#)

Members



Scrutiny

- Scrutiny Update - bulletin for Members
- paper and electronic format (pdf)
- Web pages - work programme, review group memberships, meeting dates and other similar information

Members Update



- Content
 - Update on reviews
 - National/regional/local context
 - Publicising activity

Officer Update



- Periodic emails - setting of work programme, agreement of work programme, progress on reviews (x2). Also aimed at key officers in partner/HSP organisations?
- Web pages - review group memberships, meeting dates and other similar information

Timing for updates



- After the setting of the work programme
- Autumn
- January
- Year-end round up (linked to annual report)

Public, stakeholders and service users



- Internet to be main focus of communications with downloadable guidance
- Specific communications tailored to individual programmes of reviews using wider range of media
- Harrow People



You are in: [Home](#) > [Council and democracy](#) > [Council departments](#) > [Scrutiny](#) > Suggesting a topic for scrutiny to consider

- Home
- [Council and democracy](#)
- [Council departments](#)
- [Scrutiny](#)**

Suggesting a topic for scrutiny to consider

How can I suggest a topic I would like scrutiny to look at?

The scrutiny committees generally put together a work programme for the forthcoming year in spring cycle of meetings. This year this process will take place slightly later because of the local elections scheduled for May 2006. The programme is targeted at the most important issues to the council and residents.

Topics can be identified through, for example, surveys and consultation exercises but also through suggestions made by the public - for example this year the review of **public green spaces in Harrow** was suggested by a number of local residents.

If you have a suggestion for a topic you would like scrutiny to look at please email scrutiny@harrow.gov.uk or write to: Freepost RLYS-HRTC-TREH, Harrow Council, Scrutiny Unit, PO Box 57, Civic Centre, HARROW, HA1 2XF.

Scrutiny councillors will be told about your suggestion when they are putting the programme of work together and will consider whether or not to include it on the programme by looking at all the potential topics suggested, assessing the likely impact and also resource commitments.

You might also like to consider [getting involved in a review by attending an event](#) or [participating in a review](#).





are in: [Home](#) > [Council and democracy](#) > [Council departments](#) > [Scrutiny](#) > Getting involved in scrutiny

- [Home](#)
- [Council and democracy](#)
- [Council departments](#)
- [Scrutiny](#)

Getting involved in scrutiny

I am a member of the public - how can I get involved?

Scrutiny seeks to engage with local people and local communities and in this way councillors hopes to engage in matters that are local priorities or concerns.

Events

At the moment there are no forthcoming events as we are drawing to the end of the municipal year, but future events will be publicised on these pages.

This year we have held a wide variety of events to engage with local people. These have included:

- **focus groups** looking at the development of tourism in Harrow
- a **conference** to identify local drivers of fear of crime
- **joint committee** meetings with neighbouring boroughs to look at the redevelopment of Northwick Park hospital
- **surveys** on topics including adult and community learning, tourism, consultation on traffic schemes

We will be publicising future events on these pages. If you would like to be added to a mailing list to find out about future events please email scrutiny@harrow.gov.uk or write to: Freepost RLYS-HRTC-TREH, Harrow Council, Scrutiny Unit, PO Box 57, Civic Centre, HARROW, HA1 2XF

You might also like to consider [suggesting a topic for review](#) or perhaps you would like to [participate in a review](#)?



Technical and community experts



- Web based information
- Harrow People article



are in: [Home](#) > [Council and democracy](#) > [Council departments](#) > [Scrutiny](#) > Participating in a review

- [Home](#)
- [Council and democracy](#)
- [Council departments](#)
- [Scrutiny](#)**

Participating in a review

This year in particular a number of local residents have become members of the review group teams and worked alongside councillors undertaking scrutiny.

This year nearly all of the projects scrutiny has undertaken have benefited from the input of local residents who have given up time to join councillors in the projects they are undertaking. Broadly speaking this involvement falls into two types, although there is some overlap:



Community expert - review groups benefit from the input of residents who may have experienced the services that the review is exploring. Recent examples have included the adult and community learning review - two adults who had undertaken learning in Harrow joined the review group to bring the perspective of the learner. Alternatively you might represent a local community group which has an interest in a particular service - for example you may represent a user group.

Technical expert - often the topics scrutiny looks at can be highly technical and the projects often benefit from the input from people with relevant professional or technical experience. For example, a review which examined provision for special educational needs benefited from contributions made by a local pediatrician. The recent review of community engagement was co-chaired by the chief executive of Harrow Association of Voluntary Service (HAVs).

Involvement at this level stretches beyond attending a single event - residents who are interested in being involved in a review should be prepared to attend a number of meetings and perhaps visits to other boroughs or other parts of the country, though of course this will depend on the particular project.

If you are interested in getting involved in scrutiny as a community or technical expert please email scrutiny@harrow.gov.uk or write to Freepost RLYS-HRTC-TREH, Harrow Council, Scrutiny Unit, PO Box 57, Civic Centre, HARROW, HA1 2XF. Alternatively if you would like to discuss your involvement in more detail please call 020 8420 9388 and ask for the Scrutiny team manager.

You may also like to consider [suggesting a topic for review](#).

Potential targets



Scrutiny

- Press release after every review
- 2 general Harrow People articles per year; 2 articles related to specific reviews
- 4 Member/Officer Updates

How to contact us



Web: www.harrow.gov.uk/scrutiny

Email: scrutiny@harrow.gov.uk

Phone: 020 8420 9388

Write: Freepost RLYS-HRTC-TREH, Harrow Council, Scrutiny Unit, PO Box 57, Civic Centre, HARROW, HA1 2XF

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