

Meeting:	Sustainable Development and Enterprise
Date:	6 July 2006
Subject:	Scrutiny Work Programme
Responsible Officer:	Paul Najsarek, Director, People Performance and Policy
Contact Officer:	Ed Hammond, Scrutiny Officer
Portfolio Holder:	Business Development
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Part I

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

That the sub committee:

- Considers and comments upon the items included in the work programme long list for this sub/committee
- Agrees reviews to undertake over the summer of 2006 as outlined in 2.4.1.
- Notes and comments upon the items in the work programmes of the other committees/sub committees
- Calls for a further report to the next meeting of the sub/committee incorporating more detail with regard to scope, prioritisation and methodology for topics

Reason for report

This report outlines how the sub/committee's work programme has been devised for the period 2006 – 2010 and introduces the key topics that have been included in an initial 'long list'. The report also considers new ways in which the work programme might be undertaken.

When agreed the sub committee's work programme will be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny committee for information.

Benefits

The sub/committee has the opportunity to contribute to the improvement of services for local people and the work of the council in a number of ways. By carefully structuring the work programme, the sub committee has the opportunity to:

- Gain maximum benefit out of the value they can add.
- Be strategic in the areas it targets.
- Consider its work levels and any resource implications that may be present.

Cost of Proposals

The work programme will be managed within the scrutiny budget. No additional funding will be sought.

Risks

Failing to consider the work programme in detail may mean opportunities for scrutiny to contribute to the improvement of services for local people and the work of the council may be diminished.

Implications if recommendations rejected

The Overview and Scrutiny committee is required to agree a work programme each year. Each sub committee contributes to this process by determining its own work programme and feeding this into the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Failure to provide this to Overview and Scrutiny would mean this Committee would not be able to meet its constitutional responsibilities.

Section 2: Report

2.1 Brief History

Developing the work programme

2.1.1 In September 2005, the Overview and Scrutiny committee agreed the 'Principles and Protocols of Scrutiny'. This document outlines the process by which the work programme will be developed. In particular, the document states that items included in the committees' work programme should:

- Be identified as a particular concern to residents (residents surveys/consultation exercises) and not necessarily solely within the remit of the council
- Focus on an area of poor performance (for example as highlighted by Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPs))
- Focus on areas of apparent high cost and poor performance
- Focus on the delivery of improved outcomes for local people not simply the internal structures or functions of local organisations
- Assist the council to achieve its corporate priorities
- Be requested by either senior officers or cabinet as a problematic area where the resources of overview and scrutiny would help identify service solutions
- Focus on the source of a high level of complaints
- Focus on an area in which the council wishes to develop policy
- Focus on an area in which government legislation is being developed and which would benefit from early consideration by overview and scrutiny committee/sub committees
- Be informed by the programme of inspection work to be undertaken by external inspectors in order to support rather than duplicate investigation (if appropriately programmed scrutiny could assist in identifying problematic areas, identifying solutions and thus contributing towards improved inspection score)
- Be informed by services own service improvement programme, adding value to this process by offering support to service investigations rather than duplicating.

2.1.2 The long list of issues attached as Appendix xx was identified through:

- Executive directorate service plans
- Meetings with the relevant directors/managers to discuss key issues in their areas
- Issues arising from performance monitoring – services requiring attention (poor performance) (council and partner)
- Joint priorities for the council and partners arising from the Local Area Agreement (LAA)
- Central government policy direction and areas identified by inspectorates.

2.1.3 It also includes:

- Resolutions made by the sub committee in 2005/06 that are outstanding (excluding established standing items)
- Suggestions made by members, officers and colleagues within the council and partner organisations

Delivering the work programme

2.2.1 During the conduct of last year's work programme, councillors felt that other methods could also be employed to improve how scrutiny is delivered. In particular this reflected experience that suggested that the amount of items being considered at committee meant that the actual time devoted to each was insufficient to allow effective challenge. During the year, both the Strengthening Communities and Environment and Economy sub committees held special meetings to consider particular items from

their work programmes that would otherwise been included as agenda items at committee

2.2.2 The 'Scrutiny Principles and Protocols' paper, adopted by the Overview and Scrutiny committee in September 2005 noted:

'The majority of the work of scrutiny is currently carried out either via in depth review groups or as items on the quarterly committee meeting. As only a maximum of 2 reviews are practical each year this means that the agendas of committee become overcrowded and thus that a number of issues not meriting detailed consideration via in depth review, are not being given the attention that they nevertheless warrant. It is becoming apparent that alternative methods for scrutinising the council's performance should be investigated. The scrutiny committees and the scrutiny unit would like to experiment with different approaches to the scrutiny function in order to enhance the challenge process and the subsequent benefit to services.'

2.2.3 Whilst both committee and in-depth review still clearly have a key role to play, there are a number of additional methodologies that might be usefully deployed to deliver the scrutiny work programme and these are outlined below. When considering the work programme, members might also like to consider these different approaches to its completion.

- Small-scale reviews – of time-sensitive issues, or matters where a particular element of policy or performance might need to be considered. They could be commissioned by the (sub) committee at one meeting, to report back to the next one with either some key findings, or if appropriate key findings and recommendations, which could be discussed and approved as appropriate.
- Working parties – where issues are of continued importance (for example, the delivery of a statutory function or a long-term council project). It would eliminate the necessity for officers to continually attend committee to present updates on issues which may not have changed substantially since the last meeting. For example, members might find it useful to have a working party following through the progress of the Decent Homes Programme or the Business Transformation Project, which could report back to the committee on an annual / six monthly basis. A working party would be free, if it wished, to do its own research on a particular issue and discuss policy development in this context with officers from the particular service involved, lending flexibility to the discussion on ongoing items.

- Challenge sessions – on many occasions – particularly when a policy is being developed – officers appreciate feedback on proposals from members. The committee environment is not suited to this, mainly because of time constraints. Challenge sessions, where a small group of officers and members are able to discuss a particular policy or strategy more informally and in more detail, provide an opportunity for members to provide an alternative, ‘real time’ perspective to council business, and lend additional accountability to the policy development process. This level of detailed challenge would not be possible as a single item on a packed committee agenda. The key findings of the session could then be fed back to the sub-committee for endorsement. Challenge sessions could provide an additional forum for involving Portfolio Holders.
- Evidentiary hearings – an opportunity for internal officers and external partners to meet members to consider national, regional and local policy and performance – although it would be geared towards collecting evidence from external partners. The purpose would be to identify key examples of “best practice”, and to benchmark with neighbouring authorities and other organisations carrying out similar roles. Findings and recommendations, where appropriate, could then be fed through the sub-committee to the officers involved. There could always be the option of expanding a single evidentiary hearing into a small-scale review, with the addition of a desktop review of evidence, site visits and other events if thought necessarily. An evidentiary hearing also formed a key part of the Tourism review undertaken by the last administration.
- Conferences – conferences allow members, officers and partners to engage with local people to identify ways of improving council services. Workshops, exercises and activities will enable members to reflect suggestions and proposals which partners and the public might want the council to adopt on a particular issue. These can be fed back to the sub-committee as a set of key findings (identifying areas where members of the public have expressed concern, or have praised council activities) or incorporated into a larger, ongoing review process. In the case of the former, members could ask officers for a verbal or oral response at the next meeting as to how they propose to respond to the points raised at the conference.
- Public events – this would tend to be more along the lines of a public consultation, survey or focus group, more usually used as part on a larger-scale review. It would enable members to get a “snapshot” of public opinion on a given issue, which would be useful (if carried out at the right time) for officers developing policies. It might also enable members to identify whether certain issues raised sufficient public concern to justify further study in the form of a small-scale or in-depth review, and provide signposts to officers in the case of potentially shifting priorities.

It is hoped that these suggested methods of delivering the work programme would make the best use of both members' and officers' time and at the same time deliver the most effective challenge to the council's policy and performance.

Considering the long-list

2.3.1 Attached to this report are appendices incorporating the long-lists of items for inclusion in the work programmes for each committee, derived as per the process outlined above. This is the first time this list has been considered by members and as this is the first meeting of a new administration, it is suggested that members do not make any formal decisions on the content of the work programme but spend time during the ongoing induction period to consider the suggested topics and call for a further report to the next cycle of meetings to determine their programme of work. This report would be more specific regarding:

- prioritisation of topics for consideration
- their programming and
- appropriate methodologies

2.3.2 As a further development of previous practice, it is suggested that members consider developing a 4-year programme. This again reflects a more flexible approach to delivery of the work programme and allows for programmes of work comprising different approaches to be developed during the lifetime of the committees. However, it is suggested that members bear in mind that:

- realistic project planning needs to be undertaken to ensure that each committee has a realistic workload – for example, previously, each committee was not expected to undertake more than 2 in-depth reviews each year. An assessment of the likely resource commitment for the proposed different methodologies will need to be undertaken to inform work programme decisions.
- a degree of flexibility will need to remain in the work programmes of each committee to allow for the inclusion of 'urgent' items for example items referred from cabinet or local regional or national policy developments.

Specific issues for the Sustainable Development and Enterprise Scrutiny sub committee

2.4.1 The suggested work programme for the Sustainable Development and Enterprise Scrutiny sub committee is attached as Appendix E. More information on some of the topics listed is provided below.

2006/07

Drought planning (ch) – challenge or evidentiary session with Three Valleys Water to discuss continued drought conditions, water management and other resourcing issues. Approval is being sought for this panel now, so that it can take place in late July and report back to the sub-committee in September.

Six Month / Annual Updates – Tourism Review (ch) – a challenge panel might be appropriate to look in detail at how the council is continuing

to support the tourism function, and to analyse how the review's recommendations are being implemented.

Six Month / Annual Updates – Adult and Community Learning (ch) – as above.

Welcome to Harrow (ltr) – a review could look at the potential benefits of a scheme, examining if it might be justified; it could examine how other authorities have implemented “welcome pack” schemes, and make recommendations accordingly. It would report back to the committee this September. A draft scope has been provided to the sub-committee for consideration at this meeting.

Borough-wide economic development (ch) – this would be a challenge panel looking at an economic development strategy currently being developed by the council, which has potential to impact upon the way that the borough provides assistance and support to local businesses.

Impact of Harrow's demography upon delivery of services (idr – four year programme) - Harrow is one of nine local authorities in the country the majority of whose residents are from ethnic minorities (currently a couple of tenths of one per cent over 50%). Recently, the borough's Vitality Profiles have provided more detailed demographic information which has allowed officers to plan services to take into account more local needs, but no work has been carried out to anticipate how future demographic changes – and the ones currently under way – will affect these matters more strategically.

2007/08

Demography (idr – four year programme) - continuing

Town centre redevelopment (idr – three year programme)

Programme of work – possibly following on and building on the borough-wide economic development challenge in 2006/07 if agreed. Following through the town centre redevelopment process in partnership with local people, officers, private sector partners, developers etc. It is proposed that a working party be set up which might, amongst other things, interpret the findings and recommendations of the sub-committee (and other scrutiny bodies) and place them in the context of the town centre redevelopment. At this stage more detailed planning is not possible as the timescales and development plans for the project itself have not yet been finalised.

Housing (idr – three year programme)

Programme of work. This could include consideration, in 2008/09, of the council's plans for developing the borough's housing stock post-Decent Homes. It might also look at private sector housing, homes in multiple occupation and other issues affecting housing more widely.

Energy consumption (idr)

Possible commissioning in March/April 2007 with report being completed November/December 2007. A review on energy consumption might look

at energy prices and supply, the implications for businesses and residents, and the support, guidance and advice being provided by the council and other bodies.

Traffic management (idr)

Examining ways for the council's LIP to link in with the new Local Development Framework, and to ensure that best practice from other authorities is being considered to tackle traffic management in the borough.

2008/09

Demography (continuing)

Town centre redevelopment (continuing)

Housing (continuing)

Adult and community learning (ACL): value for money (ltr or idr)

The review of ACL carried out last year identified the value for money of services being delivered as an important issue that deserved further, more in-depth discussion. It was suggested at the time that this might be undertaken with the use of a case study, examining provision for those with learning disabilities. Although naturally all reviews will consider value for money, this one would consider ACL with VFM as its focus.

2009/10

Demography (continuing)

Town centre redevelopment (continuing)

Housing (continuing)

2.2 Consultation

As noted consultation has taken place with:

- Relevant Executive Directors and Directors;
- The community via Harrow's website;
- All Members of council.

2.3 Financial Implications

The scrutiny budget for 2006/07 is £340,400 which is made up of £266,050 for salaries and £74,350 for projects and other expenditure. This programme of work will be delivered within this provision.

2.5 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising out of this report.

2.6 Equalities Impact

Scrutiny reviews make a significant contribution to the improvement of services for Harrow's multicultural community. When considering any item on the work programme across the year, the sub committee specifically

takes into consideration how to engage with and meet the diverse needs of residents.

2.7 Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

Individual scrutiny reviews may impact on crime and disorder and details are given in the Appendices.

Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents

Appendix A: Suggested topics for the Overview and Scrutiny committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Appendix B: Suggested topics for the Adult Health and Social Care scrutiny sub committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Appendix C: Suggested topics for the Children and Young People scrutiny sub committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Appendix D: Suggested topics for the Safer and Stronger Communities scrutiny sub committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Appendix E: Suggested topics for the Sustainable Development and Enterprise scrutiny sub committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Appendix A: Suggested topics for the Overview and Scrutiny committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Budget <i>½ day challenge panel</i>	Budget <i>½ day challenge panel</i>	Budget <i>½ day challenge panel</i>	Budget <i>½ day challenge panel</i>
Impact of NHS financial situation <i>Working party</i>	Impact of NHS financial situation <i>Working party</i>		
Procurement programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management/ monitoring <i>IDR</i> • Delivering savings <i>IDR</i> • Procurement partnerships <i>IDR</i> 	Procurement programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management/ monitoring <i>IDR</i> • Delivering savings <i>IDR</i> • Procurement partnerships <i>IDR</i> 	Procurement programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management/ monitoring <i>IDR</i> • Delivering savings <i>IDR</i> • Procurement partnerships <i>IDR</i> 	Procurement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management/ monitoring <i>IDR</i> • Delivering savings <i>IDR</i> • Procurement partnerships <i>IDR</i>
Community Engagement strategy <i>Report</i>			
Community strategy <i>Report</i>			
Corporate assessment <i>½ day challenge panel</i>			
Power enquiry <i>Report</i>			

HR Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivating and rewarding staff - IDR • Harrow council as an employer IDR • Internal communications STR • Recruiting BME staff IDR • Revised strategy for people – ½ day challenge • Management development post MMR – STR 			
Olympics programme	Olympics programme	Olympics programme	Olympics programme
Audit/Risk ½ day challenge panel	Audit/Risk ½ day challenge panel	Audit/Risk ½ day challenge panel	Audit/Risk ½ day challenge panel
MORI outcomes Report	MORI outcomes Report		
	Equalities programme	Equalities programme	Equalities programme
Community calls to action – implications of the white paper(s) Report			
Ombudsman’s annual report Report	Ombudsman’s annual report Report	Ombudsman’s annual report Report	Ombudsman’s annual report Report
	Service and corporate planning STR		
	Embedding performance management STR		
Culture programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural strategy ½ day challenge panel 			

• Arts culture Harrow STR

Appendix B: Suggested topics for the Adult Health and Social Care scrutiny sub committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Review of catering services Report			
ACL provision for people with learning disability IDR			
Obesity /Diabetic Care IDR x with Children			
Integrating mental health services Report plus further work			
Eye care for older people Report plus further work			
Northwick Park reconfiguration Joint committee	Northwick Park reconfiguration Joint committee		
Integration of council/PCT provision Programme – link to finance working party	Integration of council/PCT provision Programme	Integration of council/PCT provision Programme	Integration of council/PCT provision Programme
	Adults social care VFM IDR		
	Impact of rationalisation of services on well – being IDR Older peoples chiropody services – case study		
	Implementation of leisure card IDR		
	MORI outcomes Report and possible programme		
	Community strategy - report		

Appendix C: Suggested topics for the Children and Young People scrutiny sub committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Review of catering services Report			
Young people's sexual health IDR			
Obesity /Diabetic Care IDR x with Adults			
JAR self assessment ½ day challenge panel			
Children and Young People's plan ½ day challenge panel or report Children's health specific - ½ day challenge panel			
School nursing STR			
14 – 19 strategy ½ day challenge panel			
Future of schools – demography IDR			
	Schools' organisation IDR – linked to demography review		
Achievement and attainment Report	Achievement and attainment Report	Achievement and attainment Report	Achievement and attainment Report
	Annual Performance Assessment ½ day challenge panel	Annual Performance Assessment ½ day challenge panel	Annual Performance Assessment ½ day challenge panel

	School exclusions STR		
	Youth engagement IDR Policing and youth – case study		
	Early years and childcare IDR		
	Post Jar programme		
	Community strategy Report		

Appendix D: Suggested topics for the Safer and Stronger Communities scrutiny sub committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Voluntary Sector Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a strategic relationship with the sector • Future role/purpose of grant funding • Increasing the voluntary sector's capacity 	Voluntary Sector Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a strategic relationship with the sector • Future role/purpose of grant funding • Arts culture Harrow • Increasing the voluntary sector's capacity 	Voluntary Sector Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a strategic relationship with the sector • Future role/purpose of grant funding • Arts culture Harrow • Increasing the voluntary sector's capacity 	
Financial inclusion IDR	•		
	Safer communities programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFOC – report • People (ASB, social cohesion) – IDR • Physical (Licensing, enforcement, envirocrime – IDR) • Decision making processes (S17 mainstreaming) – STR 	Safer communities programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fear of crime reassessment – report • ASB – IDR • Enforcement/ Envirocrime - IDR 	Safer communities programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fear of crime reassessment – report • ASB – IDR • Enforcement/ Envirocrime – IDR
Public Realm infrastructure IDR	Public Realm infrastructure IDR		
Strategic Objectives for community cohesion Report			
CDRP 6 – monthly assessments Report/ challenge	CDRP 6 – monthly assessments Report/ challenge	CDRP 6 – monthly assessments Report/ challenge	CDRP 6 – monthly assessments Report/ challenge

Faith in Harrow IDR			
Phone booth provision STR – underway			
	Area working programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended schools – STR Neighbourhood working 	Area working programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended schools – STR Neighbourhood working 	Area working programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended schools – STR Neighbourhood working
		Fuel poverty IDR	
	Community strategy Report		

Appendix E: Suggested topics for the Sustainable Development and Enterprise scrutiny sub committee work programme 2006 – 2010

Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four
Impact of changes in Harrow's demography IDR programme	Impact of changes in Harrow's demography IDR programme	Impact of changes in Harrow's demography IDR programme	Impact of changes in Harrow's demography IDR programme
Drought preparations ½ day challenge panel			
Borough-wide economic development ½ day challenge panel			
Tourism Review / ACL review ½ day challenge panel	Town centres redevelopment Programme of work	Town centres redevelopment Programme of work	Town centres redevelopment Programme of work
Welcome to Harrow LTR	Energy consumption IDR	Adult and community learning: value for money LTR	
		Accessibility LTR	
	Traffic management IDR		
	Housing Programme of work / working party	Housing Programme of work / working party	Housing Programme of work / working party
	Community strategy Report		