

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny
Date:	1 April 2008
Subject:	Scrutiny review of cultural services – Beacon Centre case study
Key Decision: (Executive-side only)	No
Responsible Officer:	Jill Rothwell, Corporate Director, Strategy and Business Support
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Paul Osborn
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Final report of scrutiny review group

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report sets out the findings and recommendations of a scrutiny review group which has investigated the operation of the Beacon Centre in Rayners Lane.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) That the findings of the review be noted.
- b) That the recommendations be endorsed, and their implementation monitored.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To contribute towards the development of cultural services within the borough, and cultural and community services in the Rayners Lane and South Harrow area.

SECTION 2 - REPORT

Background

In 2007, Overview and Scrutiny carried out an in-depth review of cultural services. The review had three case studies. These were the planned construction of a combined library and performance space at Gayton Road (a development which is now not going ahead), the redevelopment of Bernays Gardens and the operation of the Beacon Centre in Rayners Lane.

As the review progressed, it became clear that it would be difficult to gather useful evidence on the Beacon Centre, which had at that point only been open for a couple of months. As such, it was decided that this part of the review would be held over, until more detailed performance information was available, and the centre had the opportunity to “bed in”.

The decision was made to wait six months before carrying out work on this topic. Work on the Beacon Centre case study began in January 2008.

Current situation

Evidence for the review was gathered over January and February 2008. A set of findings and recommendations were then developed based upon this evidence.

The completed report is being submitted to Overview and Scrutiny for approval. Following approval it will be sent to Cabinet, who will make a decision on whether to endorse the report’s recommendations.

Endorsed recommendations are monitored by Performance and Finance, usually six months after consideration at Cabinet.

Why a change is needed

The detailed reasoning for the recommendations is given in the main body of the scrutiny report, which is attached as an appendix.

Main options

Overview and Scrutiny may decide to do one of the following:

- 1) endorse the report and its findings
- 2) not endorse the report and its findings

Other options considered

Not applicable.

Recommendation: - that the findings of the review be noted and the recommendations endorsed, with their implementation to be monitored by scrutiny in six months.

Considerations

Resources, costs and risks: There are minimal considerations in this area and where applicable they have been included within responses by the Community and Environment directorate, to the recommendations later in the report.

Staffing/workforce: There are minimal considerations in this area and where applicable they have been included within responses by the Community and Environment directorate, to the recommendations later in the report.

Equalities impact: None in relation to the recommendations.

Legal comments: None in relation to the recommendations.

Community safety: None in relation to the recommendations.

Financial Implications

Implementing the recommendations would have the following financial implications:

- Initial costs relating to the establishment of a summit
- Costs in the establishment of a multi-agency forum
- Costs in providing capacity-building support to RLETRA

Estimates have not been prepared as to the likely costs of these activities and if the recommendations were to be endorsed, costs would be to be ascertained and ensure that it can met out of existing budgets. The department will be able to provide more detailed information in advance of Cabinet later in April.

Performance implications

There are no specific performance implications, although some BVPIs or other indicators may be tangentially affected by some of the recommendations.

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Name: Stephen Dorrian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 19 March 2008		
Name: Sheela Thakrar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: 20 March 2008		

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact:

Ed Hammond, Scrutiny Officer, Strategy and Improvement

020 8420 9205: ed.hammond@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None relevant