

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	7 th October 2008
Subject:	Scrutiny work Programme – Feasibility Reports
Responsible Officer:	Tom Whiting Assistant Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder:	Paul Osborn Performance, Communication and Corporate Services Portfolio Holder
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix One: Feasibility Reports

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report accompanies the feasibility reports on the projects which were identified as priorities for undertaking as part of the scrutiny work programme for 2009/10.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny committee is asked to:

- I. Comment on the feasibility reports
- II. Identify the order in which the projects should be undertaken
- III. Refer the report to Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team for comment on the areas for consideration, the feasibility of the project and its timing
- IV. Refer the report to Full Council for information
- V. Identify chairmen for each of the projects

Section 2 – Report

Background (if needed)

On 4th September, the Overview and Scrutiny committee considered the long-list of projects for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme for 2009/10. At that meeting councillors agreed the following topics be considered as review projects to be undertaken by individual review groups:

- Promoting sustainability – as an in depth review
- Adults and housing transformation programme action plan – as a standing review
- Council communications – as a challenge panel
- A new start for Wealdstone – as a challenge panel in spring 09 at the earliest
- Development of a children’s trust model – but not until 09/10

In addition to these topics, the following projects are underway or have been agreed for inclusion in the work programme previously:

- Standing review of the budget
- Standing review of NHS finances
- Extended schools light touch review
- Care Matters – Time for Change challenge panel

Other items included in the report to O&S on 4th September will be considered either as reports to the committees:

O&S

- Legionella compliance
- Criminal Records Bureau checks for foreign employers
- Place Shaping
- Tenants rights to manage

P&F

- Performance of the Kier contract – housing repairs
- Major building projects
- Accord MP – review update
- Obesity – review update

The following items will be picked up by the Lead Scrutiny Members:

- Extent and quality of IPADs – Corporate Effectiveness
- Workforce Development – Corporate Effectiveness
- Asbestos control – Sustainable Development and Enterprise
- Blue badges/disabled badges – Adult Health and Social Care

Feasibility reports for each of the more detailed projects proposed for next year are included in the attached appendix.

Financial Implications

The cost of undertaking these projects will be met from within the existing scrutiny budget.

Performance Issues

The performance indicators below outline the council's performance in those detailed projects in which poor performance has been identified as a reason for inclusion in the scrutiny work programme. The information is included to provide a sense of the relevance of the topic proposed.

	Indicator	Frequency	Current Actual	Target
Adults and housing transformation programme action plan review	NI125	Annual	Data expected Q4	N/A
	NI127	Annual	Data expected Q4	N/A
	NI128	Annual	Data expected Q4	N/A
	NI130	Q1	165	171
	NI131	Q2	Data expected Q2	N/A
	NI132	Q1	82.4	90
	NI133	Q1	91	92
	NI135	Q1	76	57
	NI136	Q1	2333	2307
	NI139	Annual	Data expected Q4	N/A
	NI140	Annual Survey	Data expected Q4	N/A
	NI141	Q2	Data expected Q2	99
	NI142	Q2	Data expected Q2	78
	NI145	Q2	Data expected Q2	N/A
	NI149	Annual	Data expected Q4	N/A
	NI150	Annual	Data expected Q4	N/A
	BV195	Q1	82.4	90
	BV196	Q1	91	92
	BV53	Annual	Data expected Q4	12
	BV54	Q1 –	73.8	77
BV56	Q1 –	83.1	90	
BV201	Q1 –	131.6	221	
Promoting sustainability – performance against National Indicators 185, 186, 187 and 188	NI185	Annual	Starts 2009/10	Baseline to inform target expected Q4
	NI186	Annual	Starts 2009/10	Baseline to inform target expected Q4
	NI187	Annual	Starts 2009/10	Baseline to inform target expected Q4
	NI188	Annual	Starts 2009/10	Baseline to inform target expected Q4

Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? No

Any risks associated with the work programme relate to the scheduling of projects – in the context of councillors' time and the pressures of work in the area under scrutiny. Careful preparatory work, of which this initial report is a part, will be undertaken to ensure that the reviews are scoped and scheduled in full consultation with councillors and service providers. .

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Sheela Thakrar	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 3 rd October 2008		
Name: Hugh Peart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring Officer
Date: 3 rd October 2008		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Lynne McAdam, Service Manager Scrutiny, x 5387

Background Papers: Promoting sustainability – as an in depth review. None

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES / NO

APPENDIX ONE: FEASIBILITY REPORTS

Promoting sustainability	
Issue	Application to review
SECTION 1	
CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION IN WORK PROGRAMME	
Poor performance	No though the performance of the council against indicators included in the new national indicator set is set to commence and will be integral to the council's use of resources score
Area requiring policy development	Yes.
VFM concerns	No
Emerging issues	Yes.
Statutory duty	Possibly. New legislation is expected which will increase the responsibility of local government to respond to future challenges – particularly the challenge of climate change.
Long term financial benefit anticipated	Yes.
Corporate priority	Not currently.
Overriding consideration - Likely impact on delivery – will the review deliver change?	Yes. This is an area where significant cross-council work is required. Work on sustainability across Harrow is currently fragmented and focussed on efficiency savings rather than future planning.
SECTION 2	
POLICY CONTEXT	
Regional policy implications	<i>London Sustainability Commission, London Climate Change Agency, Regional transport and energy issues</i>
National policy implications	Environmental sustainability: climate change, resource depletion, peak oil Economic sustainability: recession Social sustainability: community cohesion Human sustainability: skills and the knowledge economy
Impact on local people	Significant, long-term impact. The entire project would be about how the council and its partners will be able to meet local needs in the future.
SECTION 3	
PROPOSED METHODOLOGY	
	Suggested that a three phase process be adopted – the first comprising the consideration of case studies relevant to each aspect of sustainability, the second considering what these case studies say about the work that the council needs to do more generally in the future, and the third developing a set of scenarios for the future of Harrow against which current plans and capabilities can be assessed.

Adults and housing transformation programme action plan	
Issue	Application to review
SECTION 1	CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION IN WORK PROGRAMME
Poor performance	The action plan is designed to improve the performance of the service
Area requiring policy development	There are significant changes in the policy environment in which the services operate
VFM concerns	In some instances
Emerging issues: CCA, Cabinet referral, P&F referral	Referral from the portfolio holder
Statutory duty	No
Long term financial benefit anticipated	Possibly
Corporate priority	Yes
Overriding consideration - Likely impact on delivery – will the review deliver change?	The review will support the council's response to performance by challenging proposals and monitoring the implementation of the action plan
SECTION 2	POLICY CONTEXT
Regional policy implications	
National policy implications	The Adults and housing transformation programme action plan addresses a number of national policy priorities including, Safeguarding Adults, Self Directed Support and the general transformation of social care
Impact on local people	
SECTION 3	PROPOSED METHODOLOGY
	This review to be undertaken as a standing review to cover the lifetime of the action plan and to consider the robustness of action proposed on a theme by theme basis, perhaps holding specific challenge panels on each.

Council communications	
Issue	Application to review
SECTION 1	CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION IN WORK PROGRAMME
Poor performance	Improved performance in the council's communications with residents is a priority for the council and significant resources have been allocated to achieve this.
Area requiring policy development	No – community engagement strategy has been developed in tandem with the previous scrutiny review 'HearSay'. However
VFM concerns	No
Emerging issues: CCA, Cabinet referral, P&F referral	No
Statutory duty	No
Long term financial benefit anticipated	No
Corporate priority	Enhanced reputation and improvements in consultation and engagement processes are key CIP targets.
Overriding consideration - Likely impact on delivery – will the review deliver change?	By challenging the council's communication processes, the panel should support improvement in this critical area
SECTION 2	POLICY CONTEXT
Regional policy implications	
National policy implications	There is an increasing need for council's to ensure that they are communicating with residents in order to ensure that they are sufficiently empowered to participate in the council's decision making processes.
Impact on local people	A number of concerns have been raised with councillors regarding the public's perception of the council and how effectively the council communicates with residents. Coupled with this, the council
SECTION 3	PROPOSED METHODOLOGY
	This review to be undertaken as a challenge panel which can consider how far the council has adopted the recommendations of the previous scrutiny review 'HearSay'. Given growing concern regarding young people and violent crime and that Harrow is in fact the safest borough in London, fear of crime and our capacity to communicate this vital information should be used as a specific focus for the panel.

A new start for Wealdstone	
Issue	Application to review
SECTION 1	CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION IN WORK PROGRAMME
Poor performance	No
Area requiring policy development	No
VFM concerns	No
Emerging issues: CCA, Cabinet referral, P&F referral	No
Statutory duty	No
Long term financial benefit anticipated	No
Corporate priority	The reopening of Wealdstone High Street was a key manifesto commitment and early priority for Conservative administration. Scrutiny councillors have expressed an interest in establishing the impact of the project.
Overriding consideration - Likely impact on delivery – will the review deliver change?	The review is unlikely to deliver change but may be able to point to remaining concerns/additional areas of concern.
SECTION 2	POLICY CONTEXT
Regional policy implications	None
National policy implications	None
Impact on local people	The project will give scrutiny the opportunity to identify the impact of the changes and to make recommendations to cabinet with regard to any similar future proposals or any issues that should be addressed in the local scheme
SECTION 3	PROPOSED METHODOLOGY
	The review could be undertaken by means of a challenge panel including evidence from traders, residents and relevant public transport providers..