

Meeting:	ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE
Date:	11 MARCH 2004
Subject:	WORK PROGRAMME 2004-05 AND ANNUAL REPORT 2003-04
Responsible Chief Officer	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)
Status:	Part I
Ward:	N/A
Enclosures:	Appdx.1 Existing 2004-05 work programme for the Sub- Committee Appdx. 2 Quarterly BVPI performance monitoring statement <i>(This appendix appears on the agenda for the Special meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 2 March 2004 which is available in the Council's public libraries. It is also published on the internet. In the interests of economy, it is being circulated to Members of the Sub-Committee only but is available on request)</i> Appdx. 3 Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) Performance Targets

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Constitution requires the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to report annually to full Council on its workings and to make recommendations for future work programmes and amend working methods, if appropriate.
- 1.2. This report discusses the formulation of the 2004-05 scrutiny work programme for the Sub-Committee and also proposes a process for the preparation of the annual report for 2003-04 and its submission to full Council.
- 1.3. The report also sets out for information the existing 2004-05 work commitments for this Sub-Committee.

2. **Recommendations** The Sub-Committee is asked to:
- 2.1 review its existing work programme against the agreed guidelines and criteria
 - 2.2 consider and agree a provisional work programme for 2004-05
 - 2.2 identify a maximum of two potential review topics and nominate Member(s) to liaise with officers in undertaking feasibility studies on any issues identified
 - 2.3 agree the proposed process for the preparation and publication of the annual report for 2003-04

3. **Relevance to Corporate Priorities**

- 3.1 The work of scrutiny bodies seeks to support all the Council's corporate and strategic priorities.

4. **Policy Context (including relevant previous decisions)**

- 4.1 This report addresses the requirement placed on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report to Council on the work undertaken in the previous year and on its annual work programme for the forthcoming year.

5. **Background**

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 1 April 2003 agreed the following criteria and guidelines for including items in its work programme:

Guidelines for Determining the Work Programme

- The programme must be Member led, achievable and realistic
- Work should be balanced across the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Sub-Committees
- Having regard to officer resources & demands on Members' time, each scrutiny body should, as far as possible, conduct no more than one in-depth review at a time and only commence a further review upon completion of the last
- Provision should be built into the work programme for consideration of the budget and statutory plans
- The programme should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate consideration of other issues if required
- The potential for reviews to engage the public and to produce quick wins should be taken into consideration
- Consideration should be given to building provision for Member training into the work programme

Key Criteria for Inclusion of a Topic in the Work Programme

- Review of a topic should 'add value' to the Council's corporate aims and priorities and the outcomes thereof
- Objectives must be specific
- Achievable timescales to be agreed at outset
- Topics should avoid replication of recent/planned other reviews/inspections

- 5.2 The next meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be asked whether it wishes to review the above criteria and guidelines with a view to strengthening them further.
- 5.3 The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) has identified the following four principles of good public scrutiny for effective public scrutineers
- Provide 'critical friend' challenge to executives as well as external authorities and agencies
 - Reflect the voice and concerns of the public and its communities
 - Take the lead and own the scrutiny process on behalf of the public
 - Make an impact on the delivery of public services
- 5.4 Within Harrow, the following key areas of activity for the scrutiny function have been identified.
- Holding the Executive to account.
 - Policy review and development
 - Consideration of statutory plans and the budget
 - Performance management and internal/external audit reports & inspections.
- 5.5 To date, scrutiny bodies have not prioritised responses to national imperatives within their work programmes. The Sub-Committee may now wish to consider the role which scrutiny could play in supporting the Council in preparing to address Central Government's policy agenda and anticipated initiatives. Current examples of areas where scrutiny could well 'add value' to the Council's work are in the consideration of the Government's 'choice agenda' and the Efficiency Review of Whitehall and its expenditure programmes (Gershon Review)

6 Work Programme 2004-05

- 6.1 The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport is attending this meeting to discuss the current position in relation to services in his area as part of the regular dialogue with the Sub-Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference require the scrutiny work programme to be developed in consultation with the Executive and the opportunity is, accordingly, being taken to seek the Executive's input at this meeting.
- 6.2 The Executive may refer particular issues to scrutiny for consideration. The potential to support the work of the Executive in examining particular issues of concern and in providing detailed advice on policy developmental issues is an important element of the scrutiny role. Ongoing dialogue with the Portfolio Holder will help inform the Sub-Committee's deliberations of forthcoming issues where scrutiny input may be of particular value. Under the Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is tasked with considering whether it is appropriate to respond to requests from the Council and the Executive. Where they do so, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or appropriate Sub-Committee will report their findings and recommendations back to the Executive or Council for consideration.
- 6.3 The agreed criteria for inclusion of a topic on a work programme specify the need for the topic to 'add value' to the Council's corporate aims and priorities and their outcomes. In addition, therefore, to taking into account the anticipated key initiatives and challenges, Members will wish to consider a number of other sources of information, including:

- the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)
- action plans arising from BV reports
- action plans arising from internal and external inspection reports
- any relevant LPSA targets
- Harrow's Vitality Profile
- 'hot' topics for the community, which will be well known to Members through their local knowledge and Ward work
- national imperatives.

6.4 In determining next year's work programme, Members will wish to consider the existing work commitments against the agreed guidelines and criteria and take into account reviews already commenced, ongoing monitoring of previous reviews, and the consideration of any statutory plans to be produced during the forthcoming year. Appendix 1 shows the existing work commitments of the Sub-Committee. The forthcoming statutory plans will be added to the work programme once the timetable for their consideration has been finalised.

6.4 Scrutiny reviews are, of course, only one aspect of the work of the Sub-Committee. Scrutiny bodies will receive the action plans for all external inspection reports and Best Value reports in their areas after they have been considered by either Cabinet or the Portfolio Holder. Scrutiny's role is to examine the reports and action plans and identify any issues the progress of which it would like to monitor over the next 12 months. When identified, such issues will be added to the work programme. Further external inspection reports may also be added to the work programme as the year progresses.

6.5 Equally important is the need for scrutiny members to be alert to key areas of work which will be forthcoming both in the short and longer term, as may be identified by the Portfolio holder or notified in the published four monthly Forward Plan of key decisions. This will enable a proactive role to be taken in looking at and commenting upon significant issues before decisions are reached, if required,

6.6 The work programme must, therefore, be a flexible document which is constantly updated to take into account changing circumstances. It is, accordingly, advisable for all scrutiny bodies to ensure that their work programmes contains sufficient spare capacity to address new issues as/when they arise. As the work programme will form part of the annual report for 2003-04, there will be a further opportunity for scrutiny to review its plans, if required, before it is reported to Council.




6.7 The Special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 2 March 2004 is due to consider the quarterly monitor of Best Value Performance Indicators which is being circulated separately to members of the Sub-Committee (Appendix 2).

The detailed information provides data for Quarter 3, 2003/04 (September - December) and, where available separately, Quarters 1 (April - June) and 2 (July - September).

The appendix provides information on the: -

- 2002/3 out turn
- the council's' quartile position in London (NB this has been updated to reflect the 2002/3 data now available)
- the target for 2003/4
- out turn performance for the quarter

The symbols in the Target and Trend columns have the following meanings:

Symbol	In the Target Column	In the Trend Column
	Performance in the quarter has surpassed the target plus tolerance*	Performance in the quarter is better than that in the previous quarter
	Performance is on target or within tolerance*	No change in performance from previous quarter/no clear trend
	Performance is below target and tolerance*	Performance is worse than in previous quarter. NB there is no arrow in the trend column – where there is no data in the previous quarter

*'Tolerance' has initially been set at $\pm 5\%$ from target.

- 6.8 Managers have been asked to provide an exception report where variance from target exceeds tolerance and these commentaries appear in the rightmost column of the spreadsheet. In some cases the word "Exception" appears on its own: this is generated by a formula, which compares Q2 performance with target, and indicates that an exception report is due but has yet to be received.
- 6.9 A considerable number of BV indicators are not (or not currently) capable of quarterly reporting. For completeness, they have been included at the end of the Appendix.
- 6.10 It is proposed that the next (Quarter 4) will be provided to Cabinet in May 2004 and to the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- 6.11 In considering whether any particular scrutiny review should be included in its work programme, the Sub-Committee will wish to ensure that a review will not replicate other recent or planned reviews/inspections and that any identified desired outcomes will add value to the Council's corporate aims and priorities. Accordingly, officers will undertake a feasibility study of the identified topic to inform Members' deliberations prior to the Sub-Committee finally committing to undertaking a review.
- 6.12 Appendix 3 sets out the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) areas. Members are reminded that the Government will pay a substantial performance reward grant to the Council of 2.5% of the Council's net budget requirement for 2002-03 (equivalent to £5,079,152) if it achieves all the enhanced targets by 31 March 2006. There are in total twelve LPSA service areas and payment is divided equally among the agreed targets. A reduced payment will be payable if the Council achieves 60% or more of any specified target but no grant will be payable in respect of an achievement of less than 60% of any enhancement in performance in relation to any particular target (or sub-target). Whilst the Harrow Strategic Partnership is monitoring progress on the LPSA targets, the Sub-Committee may wish to receive, for information, a copy of the monitoring reports to enable specific reports to be requested, if required, on an exception basis.
- 6.13 Issues which Members have already asked for reports on include indicated may be appropriate for further consideration include progress on the Best Value Reviews of Your Home Your Needs and of Planning as well as a progress update on the preparations for

the ALMO. Other issues which have been identified as possibly appropriate for review include waste management, the Council's relationship with transport providers and flooding.

6.14 In addition to in-depth reviews, Members may wish to examine some issues through a discussion at a scheduled Committee. The work programme cannot, of course, fully reflect the full level of scrutiny work being undertaken at any particular time since much of the review work is now being undertaken outside of the formal Committee structure. The Sub-Committee will, therefore, wish to remain alert to the heavy resource commitments which review work is known to place on Scrutiny Members.

6.15 **Members are asked to review the Sub-Committee's existing work plans against the agreed criteria and guidelines for determining the work programme and agree its priorities for 2004-05. If appropriate, the Sub-Committee is asked to identify a maximum of two issues which it would, provisionally, wish to prioritise for in-depth review, subject to the outcome of officer feasibility studies, and to nominate Members to liaise with officers on the objectives and desired outcomes of any proposed review.**

7. ANNUAL REPORT 2003-04

7.1 The Constitution requires the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report to the Council annually on the work undertaken in the preceding year. Following the format adopted last year, it is suggested that the annual report should include the following elements

- Chair's Foreword
- Background to the Scrutiny function
- Evaluation of the overall achievements of scrutiny over the past year & lessons learnt - what has worked and what has not worked
- Signposts for improving the scrutiny function in the future
- Highlights from the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Highlights from the work of each of the Sub-Committees
- Work programme for 2004-05
- Concluding Thoughts

7.2 It is proposed that Sub-Committees' contribution to the 2003-04 report should be agreed in the June cycle of meetings, for referral to, and endorsement by, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and presentation at the first available Ordinary Council meeting. Once agreed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, a copy of the report will be placed on the next Cabinet Information Circular.

7.3 **The Sub-Committee's views are requested on any particular issues which it is felt should be highlighted within the annual report.**

8. **Financial Observations** Cabinet has agreed a scrutiny growth bid of £167,000 for 2004-05, which includes the provision for a seconded post from Audit & Consultancy Services. If approved by Council, this will, for the first time, provide for a realistic scrutiny budget and the necessary additional dedicated scrutiny support.

9. **Legal Observations** - None.

Background Papers:

Constitution of the London Borough of Harrow

LPSA Agreement

Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1 April 2003

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ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SCRUTINIY SUB-COMMITTEE
DRAFT OUTLINE WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE 2004/05

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Type of Report</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Env & Eco Sub 9 June 2004	Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2003/04	REGULAR ANNUAL	
	Arms Length Management Organisation – Progress Towards Achieving a 2* rating	SCHEDULED ITEM	Min 58 of E&E Sub on 22/10/03 refers.
	Progress report on Your Home Your Needs Action Plan	SCHEDULED ITEM	
	Progress Reports on Reviews - Members' Verbal Updates	REGULAR ITEM	
	Rent Arrears and Voids for Local Authority Housing Stock	REGULAR QUARTERLY ITEM	Info Circular report. Min 49 of E&E on 17/7/03 refers.
	Work Programme for the Environment & Economy Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2004/05	REGULAR ITEM	Info Circular report

Env & Eco Sub 27 Sept 2004	Housing Need & Supply Annual Statistical Summary 2003/2004	REGULAR ANNUAL	
	Progress Reports on Reviews - Members' Verbal Updates	REGULAR ITEM	
	Annual Report of the Director of Trading Standards	REGULAR ANNUAL	Info Circular report. E&E 31/3/03 agreed that this should be an information item. To be received after consideration by the Brent & Harrow Trading Standards Joint Consortium Committee
	Rent Arrears and Voids for Local Authority Housing Stock	REGULAR QUARTERLY ITEM	Info Circular report. Min 49 of E&E on 17/7/03 refers.
	Work Programme for the Environment & Economy Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2004/05	REGULAR ITEM	Info Circular report

Meeting	<u>Title</u>	<u>Type of Report</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Env & Eco Sub 30 Nov 2004	Scrutiny Work Programme for 2005/06 – Preliminary Discussions with the Portfolio Holder	REGULAR ANNUAL	
	Private Sector Housing Renewal Grants Policy – Report back on the Operation of the Policy	SCHEDULED ITEM	Min 69 of E&E Sub on 17/12/03 refers.
	Progress Reports on Reviews - Members' Verbal Updates	REGULAR ITEM	
	Rent Arrears and Voids for Local Authority Housing Stock	REGULAR QUARTERLY ITEM	Info Circular report. Min 49 of E&E on 17/7/03 refers.
	Work Programme for the Environment & Economy Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2004/05	REGULAR ITEM	Info Circular report

Env & Eco Sub 10 March 2005	Annual Work Programme for 2005/06 and Annual Report for 2004/05	REGULAR ANNUAL	
	Progress Reports on Reviews - Members' Verbal Updates	REGULAR ITEM	
	Rent Arrears and Voids for Local Authority Housing Stock	REGULAR QUARTERLY ITEM	Info Circular report. Min 49 of E&E on 17/7/03 refers.

Also need to programme in :-

- Annual/six-monthly attendance by the Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder and the Planning, Development & Housing Portfolio Holder
- Reporting of External Assessments once they have been considered by Cabinet
- Reporting of Improvement Plans arising from Best Value reviews once they have been approved by Cabinet
- Monitoring of recommendations arising from completed reviews
- Statutory plans

LPSA PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Lifelong Learning

- 1 Increasing Educational Achievement & Inclusion
- 2 Truancy & Attendance

Health & Social Care

- 3 Improved Educational Attainment of Children & Young People in Care
- 4 Increased Permanent Families for Children Through Adoption

Strengthening Communities

- 5 Drug Misuse and Treatment
- 6 Reduction in Robberies

Environment & Economy

- 7 Recycling of Waste
- 8 Reduced Personal Injury Road Casualties
- 9 Increasing Employment through Increased Small Business Startups
- 10 Street Scene
- 11 Improved e-Commerce Capabilities in Harrow SMEs

Overview & Scrutiny

- 12 Improving the Cost Effectiveness of the Council