

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
AND SCRUTINY SUB-  
COMMITTEES**

---

<b>Date:</b>	13 April 2010
<b>Subject:</b>	Draft Scrutiny Member Induction/Development Programme 2010/11
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director Partnership Development and Performance
<b>Scrutiny Lead Member area:</b>	Councillor Stanley Sheinwald, Chairman Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Enclosures:</b>	None

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report sets out the initial proposals regarding the scrutiny member induction/development programme for 2010-11.

**Recommendations:**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members consider and comment upon the proposals included in the induction/development programme.

## **Section 2 – Report**

The municipal elections in May 2010 will see a number of new councillors returned to office and may see a number of existing councillors returned to different roles and responsibilities. In these circumstances it is essential to the effective running of the Overview and Scrutiny committee that all councillors who subsequently undertake scrutiny responsibilities are supported in their new roles. It is also critical, that whether scrutiny councillors or not, that all members of the council receive information regarding the function and their roles and responsibilities in relation to it. This report outlines the emerging proposals for an induction and ongoing development programme for scrutiny councillors.

There are clearly different components of the training programme which will be offered to scrutiny councillors. Introductory components such as 'What is Scrutiny', 'How Does Scrutiny Work in Harrow', 'What are My Roles and Responsibilities' will need to be provided alongside some of the specific role support required for example for lead councillors or chairmen and vice chairmen. It will also be critical to familiarise councillors with the different functions they may be scrutinising, particularly relevant in this context is the scrutiny of health or other partner performance or indeed the very sensitive area of children's services. There are also a range of skills which councillors may need to master to be effective scrutineers, for example, performance management, community engagement and effective chairing of meetings. It is important that the programme developed is able to address all of these needs.

It is important that the programme is appropriately targeted to ensure we make the best use of the limited resources available and meet real training need. It is with this in mind that from an early point following the election, the scrutiny team will undertake a 'training needs analysis' and will speak to all scrutiny councillors in order that we can target the training programmes provided and ensure that everything offered is of relevance. It is equally important that member development is not something restricted to the weeks and months immediately following an election. Councillors must be able to access the support that they need to be able to deliver their roles effectively and the 'needs analysis' will help to facilitate this. Also through the use of the analysis, we will hopefully be able to identify how councillors would like to receive their training and support, the large training seminar, likely to characterise our initial support programme, may not be the preferred method of providing support going forward.

This said, there are some basic principles regarding provision of training and support which have been established during the lifetime of the current administration which it is proposed are carried forward for the next administration. Basically these are that:

- Training as far as possible should be carried out in-house
- Training should be interactive.

Whilst not a principle, it would also be beneficial if the expertise of existing councillors could be harnessed as part of the programme of events and as far as is agreeable/possible the team would like to invite current councillors to help and support the programme of training established next year.

The scrutiny member induction/development programme must not duplicate or conflict with induction or development training offered elsewhere in the organisation and the programme must be cognisant of corporate training proposals. The scrutiny team is liaising closely with other officers to ensure this is not an issue.

The paragraphs below outline the current proposals.

### **Corporate Induction Programme**

#### *Welcome Evening*

The scrutiny display boards and leaflets, annual reports and other information will be present at the welcome evening and members of the team will be available to provide information and advice regarding the scrutiny function.

#### *Introduction Evening*

On 17<sup>th</sup> May, a basic introduction to scrutiny session will be delivered. This session will be delivered twice on the same evening. The purpose of the session is to provide as much information as possible to new councillors in order that they are able to understand the function and whether or not it is something they would like to put themselves forward for when decisions are being made within each of the groups about roles and responsibilities.

The session will cover the following:

- Why we need scrutiny?
  - Democratic structures – holding to account
  - Improving services, challenging performance – council and partners
  - Helping to develop policy
  
- What we mean by scrutiny?
  - Independent
  - Councillor led
  - Working with local people
  - Improve services
  
- How does scrutiny work in Harrow?
  - Committees
  - Lead members
  - Projects
  
- What difference have we made?
  - Examples of successful projects – presented by previous councillors and officers from relevant services

Officers are exploring the possibility of showing the Association of Democratic Services Officers DVD 'What has scrutiny ever done for us?' as part of this

introduction. It may also be possible to include some kind of quiz to make the event more interactive.

### **Scrutiny Specific Induction Programme**

Once it is clear which councillors will be undertaking a scrutiny role, a specific programme of induction will be rolled out to these members. Full details of what will be included and how specifically it will be delivered will be subject to further development but the following table outlines the teams initial thinking on the strands that can form an overall scrutiny induction/development programme for the first twelve months of the next administration.

Strand	Target Audience	Possible components of the strand	How delivered
<p>About scrutiny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This strand offers a basic but crucial introduction to new scrutiny councillors as to what we do, how we do it and what difference we can make.</li> </ul>	<p>All scrutiny councillors</p>	<p>What is the point of scrutiny? How do we make a difference?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy development</li> <li>Service improvement</li> <li>Holding the executive to account</li> </ul> <p>What can we do, what can't we do and what should we do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The legal background to scrutiny</li> <li>Decision making?</li> <li>Work programming</li> </ul> <p>How does scrutiny work in Harrow?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structures</li> <li>Cross party working</li> <li>Links with the community</li> <li>Links with officers – services</li> <li>Links with officers – the team</li> <li>Links with the executive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workshop format mixing new and returning scrutiny councillors and councillors from each political party</li> <li>'Family Fortunes' icebreaker</li> <li>Presentations with handouts/guidance on some of the specifics</li> <li>Case study discussions on how we work and what we've achieved</li> <li>Practical exercises on selecting a topic to consider and how to investigate it</li> </ul>
<p>My skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This strand will support councillors to develop the skills required to support them in their role as</li> </ul>	<p>All scrutiny councillors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do we decide what is the most important issue to consider</li> <li>How do we gather evidence</li> <li>How do we develop a question plan</li> <li>How do we engage with residents</li> <li>How do we interview senior officer</li> <li>How do we challenge the executive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A practical workshop, in greater detail than 'About Scrutiny' workshop, in which councillors are asked to select a topic for consideration and develop a project plan and question plan for delivering the investigation</li> <li>To include role play with some councillors/officers being interviewed</li> </ul>

scrutiny councillors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we assess evidence presented</li> </ul>	as residents or executive members/senior council officers/partners
<p>My roles/responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This strand will support those councillors who undertake some of the specific scrutiny roles</li> </ul>	<p>For those scrutiny councillors with specific responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairmen/vice chairmen</li> <li>• Lead councillors</li> <li>• Performance and Finance committee members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairman/Vice Chairmen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ General chairing skills</li> <li>○ Chairing in a cross-party political environment</li> <li>○ How to build an effective agenda</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lead councillors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What do we mean 'lead councillor'?</li> <li>○ Building the expertise of the lead members</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This may be provided on a pan-London basis or may be sourced from national providers</li> <li>• Ongoing support will be provided by the scrutiny team through chairmen's briefings</li> <li>• Initial workshop for all lead members to discuss the role and responsibilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ With previous leads.</li> <li>○ Using case studies on how to respond to issues raised.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Regular 1/4ly meetings between all of the lead members with the scrutiny team</li> <li>• Regular monthly meetings for each set of leads with their relevant scrutiny officer to provide updates on policy developments and service issues – initial policy briefing document</li> <li>• Regular 1/4ly meetings for each set of lead members with the relevant scrutiny officer and relevant corporate director/ partner</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance and Finance committee members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is performance management</li> <li>○ How to understand the figures</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical skills based workshop</li> </ul>
<p>The Big Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strand will help to familiarise scrutiny councillors with the big policy issues</li> </ul>	<p>For all councillors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's going on in health?</li> <li>• What's going on for children and young people?</li> <li>• What's going on for the police?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round table discussions with officers from relevant services</li> <li>• These may already be scheduled as part of the corporate induction programme. If not, it may be relevant to open them out to non-scrutiny councillors</li> </ul>

### **Financial Implications**

There are no additional financial implications associated with the delivery of this report as the majority of the programme will be delivered in house by the scrutiny team and other officers from the council. In circumstances where it is decided to use pan-London or national training schemes, the costs will be met from within existing resources.

### **Performance Issues**

There are no performance issues associated with this report

### **Environmental Impact**

There is no environmental impact associated with this report.

### **Risk Management Implications**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

### **Corporate Priorities**

Building stronger communities

### **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

Not necessary for this report

### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny, 020 8420 9387

**Background Papers:** None