

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:	11 October 2010
Subject:	Scrutiny Work Programme Update
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director Partnership Development and Performance
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	All
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report updates the Overview and Scrutiny committee on progress on the delivery of the scrutiny work programme.

Recommendations:

Councillors are asked to:

- I. Note progress on the delivery of the work programme as agreed July 27th 2010
- II. Agree that the second phase of the scrutiny work programme comprises
 - a. implications of the results of the HAVS investigation
 - b. standing review of the Better Deal for Residents Programme
 - c. standing review of the budget
 - d. Housing Ambition Plan challenge panel
- III. Request the scopes for the first three of these projects be presented to the next meeting of the committee (26th October)

Section 2 – Report

On 27th July, the Overview and Scrutiny committee agreed the first phase of its work programme. This comprised:

- Reinstatement of the standing review of the budget
- Establishment of a standing review to consider the Better Deal for Residents Programme

Challenge panels to consider:

- Council's IT Strategy;
- Council's Single Equalities Scheme;
- Harrow Association of Voluntary Services;
- Housing Ambition Plan

This report updates the committee on progress on each of these projects.

Outstanding projects

Standing review of the budget

Membership of this project comprises

- Cllr Anderson
- Cllr Chana
- Cllr Ferrari
- Cllr Macleod-Cullinane
- Cllr Osborn
- Cllr Phillips
- Cllr Wright,

The group has not yet met as a number of other projects have been underway over the summer months.

Standing review of the Better Deal for Residents Programme

Membership of this project comprises

- Cllr Chana
- Cllr Ann Gate
- Cllr Macleod-Cullinane
- Cllr Osborn
- Cllr Phillips
- Cllr Sashin Shah
- Cllr Wright

As per the standing review of the budget, this project has not yet started as a number of other projects have been underway over the summer months

There may be considerable overlap between these two projects and in order to determine whether they should be combined or stand alone, membership of both groups will meet to develop scopes. The outcome of this joint meeting – either single or scope or one from each project – will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 26th October.

It is anticipated that these two projects will form a significant proportion of the Overview and Scrutiny committee's work programme and may generate additional projects as the project plan evolves.

Harrow Association of Voluntary Services challenge panel

The following councillors will form this challenge panel

- Cllr Bednell
- Cllr Chana
- Cllr Ann Gate
- Cllr Macleod-Cullinane
- Cllr Miles
- Cllr Osborn
- Cllr Phillips
- Cllr Sashin Shah

As the final report from the investigation into events at HAVS has only recently been published, the terms of reference for this project have not yet been defined. However, from briefings received by the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny committee and based on initial research carried out into the grants administration process, the Chairman and Vice Chairman would like to propose three components to the review:

- grants administration– in particular monitoring processes
- training for trustees
- future arrangements for sector-wide representation.

In order to support the panel's investigation, the Internal Audit service will undertake a review of the grants administration process to identify risks and potential mitigation of these risks. The results from this piece of work, which will be incorporated into the final project report will be presented to the 23rd November meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny committee.

The committee is asked to agree this initial focus for the project and to request a formal scope for the project from the group for its next meeting (26th October)

Housing Ambition Plan challenge panel

The following councillors will form this challenge panel

- Cllr Anderson
- Cllr Macleod-Cullinane
- Cllr Phillips

This project was scheduled for the end of the year.

Projects already undertaken

Council's IT Strategy challenge panel

Membership of this project comprised

- Cllr Ann Gate
- Cllr Ferrari
- Cllr Macleod-Cullinane
- Cllr Osborn
- Cllr Phillips
- Cllr Wright

Unfortunately, the timeframe within which to hold a challenge panel in order to comment on the IT strategy proposals was extremely tight and it proved impossible to schedule a challenge panel within this window which all councillors could attend. As a result the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny committee asked for a presentation on the proposals to be made to the committee on 8th September by the Director of Corporate Finance, the Head of IT and the Performance, Customer Services and Corporate Services Portfolio Holder in order that the committee might have an opportunity to offer its views on the proposals to Cabinet. The minutes of this meeting were referred to Cabinet.

Council's Single Equalities Scheme challenge panel

Membership of this project comprised:

- Cllr Macleod-Cullinane
- Cllr Miles
- Cllr Phillips

This challenge panel, to enable scrutiny to contribute to consultation on the council's new Single Equalities Scheme, took place on 6th September and the final report of the panel's findings is being prepared.

Additional projects undertaken

During the first few months of this administration a number of additional projects were undertaken. In the context of the difficult economic climate in which the public sector finds itself, it is critical that sufficient flexibility is maintained within the scrutiny work programme to enable it to respond to challenges such as these as they arise.

Pinner Village Surgery closure

In addition to the projects agreed at the 27th July meeting, councillors agreed to investigate the closure of Pinner Village GP surgery. Following a discussion of the issue with representatives of NHS Harrow at the Health sub committee it was decided that, in order to investigate the obvious concerns of residents at the way in which closure had been implemented, a challenge panel should take place. This panel took place on 22nd July and has been further supplemented by information gleaned at two public meetings held in Pinner. The challenge panels report is scheduled to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee meeting on 26th October.

The panel comprised the following councillors:

- Cllr Paul Osborn (Chairman)
- Cllr Lurline Champagnie
- Cllr Ann Gate
- Cllr Jerry Miles
- Cllr Vina Mithani
- Cllr Simon Williams

Julian Maw, Chairman of Harrow LINK also joined the project.

Magistrates' Court closure

Also in addition to the projects agreed at the 27th July meeting, the committee commissioned a challenge panel to consider the implications for local justice of the proposed closure of Harrow Magistrates' Court. The panel's report was incorporated into the council's overall response to the closure which was submitted to Her Majesty's Courts Service on 15th September.

The panel comprised the following councillors

Cllr Barry Macleod-Cullinane (Chairman)
Cllr Susan Anderson
Cllr Christine Bednell
Cllr Vina Mithani
Cllr Sachin Shah
Cllr Stephen Wright

Health White Paper, 'Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS'

In order to facilitate a scrutiny response to proposals in the Health White Paper a workshop comprising scrutiny councillors, the Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, representatives of NHS Harrow and Harrow LINK and Council officers was held on 24th September. A detailed response from the workshop to the Department of Health has been produced following this meeting.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report as all scrutiny projects are funded from within the existing scrutiny budget

Performance Issues

There are none specific to 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.

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? Yes () No ()

If no, state why an EqIA was not carried out below:

This report makes no proposals with regard to service delivery.

Corporate Priorities

Please identify which corporate priority the report incorporates and how:

- Deliver cleaner and safer streets
- Improve support for vulnerable people
- Build stronger communities

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not required for this report.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

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

Background Papers: None