

REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting:	22 September 2011
Subject:	Scrutiny Review of Engaging with Young People
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap Divisional Director, Partnership Development and Performance
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Children and Young People – Councillor Christine Bednell and Councillor Krishna James
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Scope for Scrutiny Review of Engaging with Young People

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the scope for the scrutiny review on engaging with young people.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- Consider and agree the scope for the scrutiny review on engaging with young people.

Section 2 – Report

Background

A review looking at how the Council can most effectively engage with young people in decision making and volunteering activity was placed on the scrutiny work programme in the 2010/11 municipal year. The main ambition of the review is to understand the context and business case for involving young people in decision making to help them be more effective in making a contribution to community life. By bringing together what the Council already knows about young people from the 'Hearing the Voices of Children and Young People in Harrow' (Voice, Influence, Action review) of 2005, the 'Hear/Say: Scrutiny Review of Community Engagement' (2006) and other relevant reports, and pulling together other available evidence about young people, including their perceptions of the Council and opportunities to volunteer, the review also aims to stimulate debate about how the Council, in times of austerity, can find new ways to involve young people in decision making as well as offer opportunities for young people to develop employability skills through volunteering.

The review is required by its remit to identify the ways in which the council can make best use of existing resources and to play close regard to developing an overarching offer from the council to young people. This is a light-touch scrutiny review gathering evidence and formulating its recommendations until the end of the year, with a view to reporting back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2012.

The scope appended to this report follows two scoping meetings held by the review group in July and September.

At the first scoping meeting in July, Councillor Victoria Silver was nominated as the Chair of the review group.

The second meeting followed a handful of informal discussions with young people regarding what council engagement with young people looks like and the areas that the scrutiny review could focus on. The second scoping meeting involved a number of young people in further discussing the scope. It is planned to further refine the scope to take account of further input from a wider range of young people. Therefore the scope appended to this report provides a high-level terms of reference for the review.

At the second scoping meeting it was agreed the young people would lead this review and steer its direction, with the support of the scrutiny councillors and co-optees on the review group who would play a facilitative and mentoring role. For the purposes of accountability, the Harrow Youth Parliament and Scrutiny Review Group will co-own the final report and its recommendations. This will ensure that young people's voice is captured in a collaborative review and that this is on an equal footing to that of scrutiny members.

Before the next review group meeting it is planned that an informal session with young people at a youth centre will be held, in order to further inform the direction of the review. The review will seek to link to previous scrutiny

findings and the current UK Youth Parliament scrutiny project wherever possible.

This scrutiny project represents a new and innovative approach to undertaking a scrutiny review and its participative nature will be key to the success of the review, its recommendations and the review's own engagement practices.

Equalities Impact

As included in the scope, the review will consider during the course of its work, how equality implications have been taken into account in current policy and practice and consider the possible implications of any changes it recommends.

In carrying out the review, the review group will also need to consider its own practices and how it can facilitate all relevant stakeholders in the borough to have their voices heard.

Financial Implications

The costs of delivering this project will be met from within existing resources.

Performance Issues

There are no performance issues specifically associated with this report.

Environmental Impact

There is no specific environmental impact associated to this report.

Risk Management Implications

There are none specific to this report.

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No

Separate risk register in place? No

Corporate Priorities

The review relates to the Corporate Priorities 2011/12 of:

- United and involved communities: a council that listens and leads
- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not applicable.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Nahreen Matlib, Senior Professional Scrutiny, 020 8420 9204

Background Papers: Appendix A: Scope for Scrutiny Review of Engaging with Young People:

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

JUNE 2011

REVIEW OF ENGAGING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE - DRAFT SCOPE

VERSION 4

VERSION HISTORY:

1. 27 June 2011
2. 25 July 2011 – following initial scoping meeting on 20 July
3. 1 September 2011
4. 9 September 2011 – following second scoping meeting on 8 September

1	SUBJECT	Engaging with Young People
2	COMMITTEE	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
3	REVIEW GROUP	<p>Councillors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Victoria Silver (Chair of Review Group) • Councillor Sue Anderson • Councillor Christine Bednell • Councillor Ann Gate • Councillor Krishna James • Councillor Paul Osborn • Councillor Varsha Parmar • Councillor Ben Wealthy <p>Co-optees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Julie Browne – Kids Can Achieve • Anne Diamond – Scrutiny Pool of Advisors • Hema Mistry – Scrutiny Pool of Advisors • Young people – representation sought from various young people’s groups
4	AIMS/ OBJECTIVES/ OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assess how young people currently view their engagement/influence with the Council, volunteering opportunities and future prospects. • To address how best the borough can overcome current challenges and obstacles surrounding youth engagement in order to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people and make best use of existing assets.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the quality of Council dialogue with young people and enhance their influence in key policy decisions and civic participation - assess the success of Harrow engagement initiatives including recent work on Let's Talk and academies consultation, in specific relation to engaging with young people. • To help the Council develop its strategic approach to engaging with young people - to shape future services in Harrow as well as to input into national policy deliberations in 'Positive for Youth' initiatives. • To identify examples of good practice in youth engagement, including pan-London or London-wide examples of successful initiatives. • To examine the role of schools in youth engagement, especially within the new schools landscape of academies. • To engage with and upskill young people through volunteering.
5	MEASURES OF SUCCESS OF REVIEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased and more effective engagement with young people across the borough. • Increased participation by young people in Harrow council's key decisions, services and initiatives. • Successful model of youth engagement at the reopened Cedars Youth Centre and schools. • Tangible input into the development of policy in Children's Services, and more widely to the Council's approach to engaging with young people.
6	SCOPE	The scope of the review will cover services for young people from across the Council, not only Children's Services. It will only consider issues where there is the potential for the local authority to make an impact – including what the Council can add to the wider strategic operation of schools.
7	SERVICE PRIORITIES (Corporate/Dept)	<p>This review relates to the Corporate Priorities 2011/12 of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United and involved communities: a council that listens and leads • Supporting and protecting people who are most in need
8	REVIEW SPONSOR	Catherine Doran, Corporate Director Children's Services
9	ACCOUNTABLE MANAGER	Lynne Margetts, Service Manager Scrutiny

10	SUPPORT OFFICER	Nahreen Matlib, Senior Professional Scrutiny
11	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	Scrutiny Team
12	EXTERNAL INPUT	<p>The input of the following may be gauged through the course of the review:</p> <p>Stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people, for example through the Youth Parliament, Young Voices, Youth Takeover Day Volunteers, Ignite, National Citizen Service Programme, voluntary/youth and faith groups, school councils, colleges, and young people's sports/leisure clubs • Youth workers • Headteachers, teaching staff and support staff in schools • Staff within other children's settings e.g. children's centres, extended school services, youth centres • Relevant corporate director(s) • Relevant portfolio holder(s) • Harrow Association of Governing Bodies • Other local authorities <p>Partner agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harrow Colleges • Harrow Police • Harrow Primary Care Trust • North West London Hospitals Trust <p>Experts/advisers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisor from SACRE • Representative interest groups • Centre for Public Scrutiny • Academic experts • Public policy think tanks
13	METHODOLOGY	<p>The review could gather evidence using a range of methods including written evidence, oral evidence, research, questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, presentations, questioning senior managers and members, inspections, site visits, expert witnesses, public meetings etc.</p> <p>The review will be a light touch review taking evidence at a number of meetings and lasting a few months. A light touch review could explore issues through workstreams e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement initiatives and methods of dialogue between the Council and young people

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting citizenship and participation in civic life – including using council services • Volunteering and inter-generational opportunities • The role of schools in promoting participation <p>Suggested stages for the review are: Identify current policies/practices, examine how performance matches policies, benchmark against other authorities, identify issues arising, seek external input, determine how to inform policies.</p>
14	EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS	<p>The review will consider during the course of its work, how equality implications have been taken into account in current policy and practice and consider the possible implications of any changes it recommends.</p> <p>In carrying out the review, the review group will also need to consider its own practices and how it can facilitate all relevant stakeholders in the borough to have their voices heard.</p>
15	ASSUMPTIONS/ CONSTRAINTS	<p>The review will require a long-term commitment from members and officers.</p> <p>Success will depend upon the ability and willingness of officers, partners and stakeholders (as relevant) to participate and contribute fully in this review.</p>
16	SECTION 17 IMPLICATIONS	<p>The review will have regard to the possible community safety implications of any recommended changes to policy or practice.</p>
17	TIMESCALE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoping – July 2011 • Initial desktop research – Summer 2011 • Evidence gathering and review group meetings – Autumn 2011 • Final report to O&S for onward transmission to Cabinet – late 2011 / early 2012
18	RESOURCE COMMITMENTS	<p>To be met from existing scrutiny budget. No significant additional expenditure is anticipated.</p>
19	REPORT AUTHOR	<p>Nahreen Matlib, as advised by the review group.</p>
20	REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS	<p>Outline of formal reporting process: To Corporate Director [✓] throughout the course of the review and when developing recommendations</p>

		<p>To Portfolio Holder <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> as a witness in the review and when developing recommendations</p> <p>To CSB <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> to be confirmed</p> <p>To O&S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> late 2011 / early 2012</p> <p>To Cabinet <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> late 2011 / early 2012</p>
21	FOLLOW UP ARRANGEMENTS (proposals)	Monitoring by the Performance and Finance Sub-Committee after six months.