

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:	24 th November 2011
Subject:	Scrutiny Work Programme Update
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap Divisional Director, Partnership Development and Performance
Scrutiny Lead	All
Member area:	
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

Summary

This report updates the Overview and Scrutiny committee on the delivery of the scrutiny work programme and also identifies new projects for inclusion in the work programme

Recommendations:

Councillors are asked to:

- Consider progress on the existing scrutiny projects
- Agree the inclusion of the following projects in the work programme:
 - Merger of Ealing and NW London Hospitals Trust
 - Private Sector Housing Capacity
 - Customer Care

Section 2 – Report

This report provides members of the Overview and Scrutiny committee with an update on the delivery of their current work programme and suggests options for inclusion in the work programme which have been recommended by the Scrutiny Leadership Group.

Update on current projects:

Standing Review of the Better Deal for Residents Programme

The second phase of the review has started. This part of the project will consider the impact of the programme on local people and whether or not the programme is achieving its ambitions. The scope for phase two was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 1st November.

Regular reports from the VERTO system will be made to the group. From this report, the group will select completed projects in order to investigate how effectively they have delivered the outcomes anticipated. A timetable for consideration of specific projects is being devised. The first two projects to be considered are:

- Concessionary Travel
- Re-abling Focussed Care

The group hopes to consider new project proposals which are included on the VERTO system to examine how far they are assessing their impact on residents – this will specifically support the organisation's approach to Equalities in the context of the Birmingham Judgement

Standing Review of the Budget

The draft scope was agreed by the O&S committee in November. The project will consider:

- the determination and management of the Council's capital budget – including the use of capital funds to support the overall development of the borough;
- the changing local government and public sector financial policy environment and the council's response to these changes;
- the process for setting the budget and budget/savings proposals
- the impact of savings proposals on residents whether or not 'in-year' savings are being delivered

Performance Management

The report from the second phase of this project, which has comprised a more detailed consideration of the council's future performance management framework, was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny committee in November. It will be considered by Cabinet in December.

Snow Clearance	The report from the challenge panel was agreed by September 22 nd meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny committee and at Cabinet in October. An officer response to the recommendations will be considered at Cabinet in December.
Engaging with Young People	Fieldwork is currently underway. The review expects to report to the Overview and Scrutiny committee in January 2012
Debt Recovery	The challenge panel met on 9 th November and the panel's report will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 13 th December

Project Proposals

The Scrutiny Leadership has proposed that the following projects be included in the scrutiny work programme:

Merger of Ealing and NW London Hospital Trusts

The chair and vice chair of the Health and Social Care scrutiny sub-committee have met with councillors from both Brent and Ealing to consider the necessity of a joint overview and scrutiny committee (JOSC) to respond proposals to merge Ealing and NW London Hospital Trusts. They are advised that at this stage, the proposals involve a merger of management structures and thus do not constitute a 'substantial variation'. However, consultation on proposals will begin in the summer and the members from Harrow, Brent and Ealing have agreed to establish a JOSC at this time.

Private Sector Housing Capacity

A number of issues have arisen with regard to the amount and quality of private sector housing provision within the borough. There are serious concerns about the capacity of private sector housing provision and the council's relationship with providers, particularly in the context of changing government policy which will see prospective social housing tenants no longer being able to refuse offers of private accommodation pending permanent social housing allocation and ceilings put on the amount of Housing Benefit which can be paid to tenants.

Customer Care

During the investigations of both the Performance Management and Better Deal for Residents reviews, concerns have been identified about the quality of the customer care from contact to service delivery. This review would consider the customer journey through the council and in particular the links between front and back office.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Performance Issues

The projects identified for further investigation will all support performance improvement

Environmental Impact

There is none associated with this report.

Risk Management Implications

There are none associated with this report.

Equalities implications

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

There are no proposals to change service delivery included in this report. Where a review makes such proposals, it will be the responsibility of the service department to undertake the EqIA if they agree to change proposals.

Corporate Priorities

The review has the potential to contribute to all of the corporate priorities.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not required for this report.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

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Background Papers:

None