

Meeting:	Environment and Economy Sub-Committee
Date:	10 March 2005
Subject:	Annual Work Programme
Responsible Officer:	Director Organisational Performance
Contact Officer:	Alicia Weiderman, Scrutiny Officer
Portfolio Holder:	Environment and Transport
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Part I

## **Section 1: Summary**

### **Decision Required**

That the Sub-Committee:

- Consider and agree a provisional work programme 2005-06;
- If appropriate, identify a maximum of two topics for provisional prioritisation for in-depth review by the Sub-Committee;
- Identify a reserve list of up to three other potential topics for in-depth review;
- Identify further areas of potential interest for consideration during the course of the year; and
- Nominate Member(s) to liaise with officers in undertaking a feasibility study of these potential in-depth review topics.

### **Reason for report**

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.

This report discusses the formulation of the 2005-06 scrutiny work programme for the Sub-Committee. The sub-committee's annual report requirement is considered in another agenda item at this meeting.

Once agreed the sub-committee's work programme will be provided to Overview and Scrutiny for information.

### **Benefits**

The sub-committee has the opportunity to contribute to the work of the council in a number of ways. By carefully structuring the work programme, the sub-committee has the opportunity to:

- Gain maximum benefit out of the value they can add.
- Be strategic in the areas its targets.
- Consider its work levels and any resource implications that may be present.

### **Cost of Proposals**

The work programme will be managed within budget. No additional funding will be sought.

### **Risks**

Failing to consider the work programme in detail may mean opportunities for scrutiny to contribute to the work of the council may be diminished.

### **Implications if recommendations rejected**

The Overview and Scrutiny committee is required to agree a work programme each year. Each sub-committee contributes to this process by determining its own work programme and feeding this into the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Failure to provide this to Overview and Scrutiny would mean this committee would not be able to meet its Constitutional responsibilities.

## **Section 2: Report**

### **2.1 Brief History**

#### *Guidelines and Criteria for Developing a Work Programme*

In April 2004 the Overview and Scrutiny committee agreed the following set of guidelines and criteria for use when considering a 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 and demands on Members' time, each scrutiny body should conduct no more than 1 in-depth review at a time, as far as possible, and only commence a further review upon completion of the last
- Provision should be built into the work programme for consideration of the budget & statutory plans
- The programme should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate consideration of other issues if required
- Consideration should be given to building provision for Member training into the work programme
- The potential to produce quick wins should be taken into consideration

#### Criteria for Consideration when Developing the Work Programme

- Ability to 'add value' to the Council's corporate aims and priorities and the outcomes thereof, with a view to improving the Council's services/performance
- Potential to engage the public
- National priorities
- Strategic importance for the authority
- Existence of recent/planned other reviews/inspections

Consideration of these guidelines and criteria must be taken into account when developing the work programme.

#### *Work Programme 2005/06*

The Scrutiny Unit has developed a list of potential topics for consideration by the committee to help inform their discussions on a work programme for 2005/06.

In developing this list, the Scrutiny Unit has taken into consideration the criteria mentioned above. Suggestions for review have come from:

- Research by the Scrutiny Officer;
- Review of service plans for the Council;
- Consideration of items of importance carried over from the previous year's work programme;
- Meetings with relevant Directors; and
- Feedback from public in response to an item on the Harrow website.

Members of the sub-committee were also asked to contribute suggestions to this document.

The sub-committee may also be asked to consider items referred to it by Cabinet. There may also be items (e.g. reports, action plans) that come up from time to time that will need to be considered by the sub-committee. The work programme should therefore be flexible enough to accommodate these requests without compromising the ability of the committee to provide valuable input into these issues.

### *Types of Scrutiny Intervention*

There are a number of ways a particular issue may be approach.

Examples may include:

- Short or In-depth Reviews;
- Presentation from relevant experts; or
- Agenda Items for comment;

When reviewing items for the work programme, the sub-committee should also consider how the committee might best handle the item.

#### 2.2 Consultation

As noted consultation has taken place with:

- Relevant directors;
- The community via Harrow's website;
- Members of the sub-committee;

The Portfolio Holder is also in attendance at this meeting and will be able to input suggestions for consideration by the sub-committee.

#### 2.3 Financial Implications

This report is not seeking additional financial resources. This programme of work will be delivered within existing budget provision.

#### 2.5 Legal Implications

No impact.

#### 2.6 Equalities Impact

Scrutiny reviews make a significant contribution to the improvement of services for Harrow's multicultural community. When considering any item on the work programme across the year, the sub-committee specifically takes into consideration how to engage with and meet the diverse needs of residents.

### **Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents**

#### **Appendix 1: Suggested topics for the Environment and Economy Work Programme 2005/06**