

REPORT FOR: **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date:	3 rd April 2012
Subject:	Work Programme Update Report
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 provides members of the Overview and Scrutiny committee with information regarding progress on the projects currently included in the scrutiny work programme and also identifies emerging projects.

Recommendations:

Councillors are asked to:

- i. Note progress on the delivery of current scrutiny projects
- ii. Agree to the inclusion of the challenge panel on the implementation of review of staff terms and conditions

Section 2 – Report

The Overview and Scrutiny committee has commissioned a range of projects and this report provides the committee with an update on progress in the delivery of these projects.

Update reports from the Standing Review of the Budget and the Standing Review of the Better Deal for Residents are included elsewhere on the agenda for this evening's meeting.

Projects covered in this report are:

- Debt Recovery
- Engaging Young People
- Customer Care
- Private Rented Sector Housing
- Safeguarding Children
- Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee – NHS NW London Commissioning Strategy

Debt Recovery

This project has now been completed and a response has been received from Cabinet which accepted all of the recommendations. One of the issues which emerged from the review was the potential efficiencies to be delivered if all debt recovery functions across the council were to be centralised. Unfortunately, insufficient evidence from which to draw any objective conclusions on this issue was available to the panel. It has since emerged that officers from within the finance service are investigating the potential for central oversight of the functions and as such, the chairman of the Debt Recovery challenge panel has decided to reconvene the panel once the results of the finance service's investigation are complete. Further updates on this will be provided as the results of the investigation become available.

Engaging young people

This project, investigating the effectiveness of the council's engagement with young people, has completed its evidence gathering and a final report is now being prepared. It is anticipated that the report will be considered at the Overview and Scrutiny committee meeting on 30th May.

Customer Care

This project has just started and will be considering the customer journey through the organisation. The chair of the review is Councillor Paul Osborn and the scope for the project is included elsewhere on this evening's agenda.

Private Rented Sector Housing

This project has begun its evidence gathering and will consider the development of the new Private Rented Sector Housing Strategy, in the context of national policy changes, the council's enforcement role and actions that can be taken to encourage improved standards in the sector.

A final report from the review is expected to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee in June 2012.

Safeguarding Children

This project was requested by the Corporate Director of Children's Services as a follow up to the NHS London Safeguarding Children Improvement Team visit in 2010. The project will consider how effectively action plans which were devised following these reviews have been implemented by the council and NHS Harrow. A final report is expected to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee in June.

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) – NHS NW London Commissioning Strategy

NHS NW London is proposing significant changes to the delivery of health services in its commissioning strategy and, as required, is now consulting with all of the NW London boroughs (Harrow, Brent, Ealing, Hillingdon, Westminster, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham) which will be impacted by these changes. The JOSC has been established to facilitate engagement with NHS NW London, but this does not preclude individual authorities presenting an independent view of changes proposed. NHS NW London must consult with the JOSC on both their consultation plan and also on the proposals for change themselves. A shadow JOSC has been established and this is meeting informally from March and thereafter the formal JOSC will begin to meet in June. Formal consultation is proposed between June and September and a number of concerns of the timing of this have already been raised.

A final report from the JOSC will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny committee in the autumn.

Emerging Issues

Review of Staff Terms and Conditions

As part of the need for the council to deliver significant savings, proposals have been developed to modernise staff terms and conditions of service. These proposals will both deliver savings for the authority and also support the delivery of changing working practices. Negotiations with the Trades Unions have been taking place over a number of months and the Director of Human Resources and Development and Shared Services has also approached scrutiny to request scrutiny's consideration of the proposals.

This request was considered by the scrutiny leadership group on 19th March and the group has agreed to recommend to the Overview and Scrutiny committee that a challenge panel to consider the proposals is included in the scrutiny work programme.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report

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

Equalities implications

There are no equalities implications associated with this report

Corporate Priorities

All

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