

# REPORT FOR: **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> June 2012

**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**

This report updates members of the Overview and Scrutiny committee of progress on the 2011/12 work programme.

### **Recommendations:**

Councillors are recommended to:

- I. Consider the content of the update
- II. Approve and comment on action being taken – in particular, note the cancellation of the Modernising Terms and Conditions challenge panel

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Introduction**

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

In designing its work programme, the Overview and Scrutiny committee acknowledged the need to build flexibility into the programme in order to respond swiftly to particularly pressing needs and issues. The council and partners are facing significant challenges and if scrutiny is to effectively champion the needs of local people then it is critical that councillors are able to consider issues as they arise. As such, the committee did not publish an annual work programme but rather has built flexibility into its programme in order to be a more responsive service.

This report provides members of the Overview and Scrutiny committee with an update on the projects which are currently underway.

### **Current Projects**

#### **Standing Review of the Better Deal for Residents**

The first phase of this project, which focussed on the project management process used across the council, has completed and its recommendations were broadly accepted by Cabinet and have been implemented.

The second phase of the project is considering the impact of the programme on local people and whether or not the programme is achieving its ambitions. To support its work it has been agreed that regular information regarding new projects will be provided to the review group from the VERTO system. Since the last update report to this committee the review has considered the outcome of the Libraries RFID project and implementation of the Public Realm – Improving Street Based Services Project. The focus of the review has now shifted to projects included in T2. The first of these projects is the Localisation of Council Tax which will be discussed at a joint meeting with the Standing Review of the Budget in June.

Future meetings of the review are likely to consider:

- Strategic Review of Residential and Nursing Care
- Special Needs Transport

Regular reports are being submitted to both the Overview and Scrutiny committee and, where necessary, to Cabinet.

#### **Standing Review of the Budget**

This review is considering the policy environment in which budgetary and financial decisions are being made. Since the last update report the review has considered how the council manages major contract renewal and has begun the fieldwork visits to other councils (Hackney, Newham and Wandsworth) to support the investigation of the use of capital.

The reviews work programme also includes:

- Localisation of council tax benefit – with Standing Review of the Better Deal for Residents
- Further consideration of self financing of the Housing Revenue Account
- Business Rate Retention Scheme
- Fees and Charges
- Localism

Regular reports are being submitted to both the Overview and Scrutiny committee and, where necessary, to Cabinet.

### **Engaging Young People Review**

The final report from this project was considered at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting in May and the report will be received by Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> June.

### **Private Sector Housing**

The Overview and Scrutiny committee included this project in its work programme in order to assess the capacity and quality of private rented housing in the borough. Detailed evidence gathering is underway and a report to the Overview and Scrutiny committee is expected in the summer.

### **Customer care**

The Overview and Scrutiny committee has agreed to include this project in its work programme in order to assess the quality of the customer journey through the council. The final scope for this project was agreed in May and the fieldwork will commence in June/July following a slight delay due to pressure within the work programme.

### **Safeguarding Children**

This investigation assessed progress by the Council and health partners in delivering the recommendations from NHS London Safeguarding Children Improvement Team visit in October 2010. The report from the review is included elsewhere on the agenda for this evening's meeting.

### **NW London Commissioning Plan – 'Shaping a Healthier Future'**

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. A shadow Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) has been established and this has been meeting informally since March and thereafter the formal JOSC will begin to meet in June. Formal consultation is proposed between June and September.

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

### **Modernising Terms and Conditions**

The Overview and Scrutiny committee was approached in the spring with a request to consider the council's proposals to modernise staff terms and conditions. As the council is following statutory process which determines the

consultation etc, it was felt that a scrutiny investigation was no longer necessary. As a result, the proposed challenge panel has been cancelled. However, the Corporate Resources Lead Councillors will monitor the implementation of proposals.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report as all projects will be delivered from within the existing scrutiny budget.

### **Performance Issues**

It is anticipated that all of the current projects will contribute to improved performance.

### **Environmental Impact**

There are no environmental impacts 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? No

The projects outlined in this report are investigating various components of service delivery and each project incorporates the consideration of equalities issues. However, where proposals for change are made, it will be the responsibility of the relevant service area to undertake equalities assessment if proposals are endorsed.

### **Corporate Priorities**

- Keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe
- United and involved communities: a Council that listens and leads
- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need
- Supporting our Town Centre, our local shopping centres and businesses

### **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