



## Overview & Scrutiny Committee 9<sup>th</sup> February 2010

### Report from the Director of Policy & Regeneration

For Action

Wards Affected:  
ALL

## Strengthening Local Democracy Task Group

### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has asked officers to prepare a task group scoping report on strengthening local democracy. The draft scope is an appendix to this report.
- 1.2 There are currently a number of overview and scrutiny task groups in progress which will be completed by the end of the municipal year. Therefore, it makes sense to agree a task group scope at this stage to be started early in 2010/11.
- 1.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider the scoping document and confirm that it does want to set up a task group to look into this issue. Members should make their comments and suggest changes to the scope at this stage so that they can be incorporated into the scoping document. At this stage the committee does not need to nominate members to work on the task group. The group offices will be contacted to seek nominations after the local elections in May 2010.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
  - (i). Consider and agree the strengthening local democracy task group scoping document, included at appendix 1 to this report.
  - (ii). Agree to begin work on the task group at the start of the next municipal year, following the council elections in May 2010.

### **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009, members considered a motion approved by full Council on strengthening local democracy in Brent. The motion asked for an overview and scrutiny task group to be established to look into the issue and report back with recommendations to “increase the debate at full Council meetings, improve the public’s access to local democracy and encourage more young people to take part (in local democracy)”. The committee agreed that it would like to set up a task group to begin work in May 2010.
- 3.2 A task group scope has been drafted (see appendix 1) as a response to the committee’s decision. Members are asked to consider the scope and make any suggested changes so they can be incorporated into the final version. At this stage the committee does not need to nominate councillors to work on this task group. Officers will approach the group offices on this after the elections in May to seek nominations.
- 3.3 At present there are a number of task groups to be completed which will be reporting to committee’s before the end of the municipal year. This task group won’t begin until work on the outstanding task groups has been completed.
- 3.4 If members have suggestions for other task group topics they should contact the officers in the Local Democracy Team in the Policy and Regeneration Unit. In the meantime, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to agree the strengthening local democracy task group scope.

### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 None

### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 None

### **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 None

### **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)**

- 7.1 None

#### **Contact Officers**

Andrew Davies  
Policy and Performance Officer  
Tel – 020 8937 1609  
Email – [andrew.davies@brent.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.davies@brent.gov.uk)

Phil Newby  
Director of Policy and Regeneration  
Tel – 020 8937 1032  
Email – [phil.newby@brent.gov.uk](mailto:phil.newby@brent.gov.uk)