



**Children and Families Overview and  
Scrutiny Committee**  
18<sup>th</sup> June 2008

**Report from the  
Director of Policy and Regeneration**

For Action

Wards Affected:  
ALL

**Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Work  
Programme 2008/9**

Forward Plan Ref:

**1.0 Summary**

1.1 This report sets out the committee work programme for 2008/9

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 Members are asked to agree the work programme and suggest additional topics for review.

**3.0 Detail**

3.1 A well planned work programme is a critical component of a successful overview & scrutiny function. A programme of carefully selected topics can help engage the public, connect with the council's priorities, community concerns, and has the potential to add value to the work of the council. It is therefore important that this committee's work programme is developed and agreed by its Members

3.2 The committee can choose to scrutinise different subject areas in different ways depending on the subject size and the depth of investigation required. This can be through in depth task groups, issue specific meetings, or short discrete agenda items. In all cases the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee has the power to require the attendance of the council's Executive and officers to answer questions at their meetings.

3.3 The Local Government and Improvement in Health Act 2007 will, when it comes into force, also allow overview & scrutiny committees to require information from 'relevant

partner organisations'. The Act also makes provision for 'Councillor Call for Action which will allow all councillors to refer matters to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Guidance on the practical implementation of this measure is expected in the autumn.

- 3.3 It is possible that the committee will have more subject areas that it would like to consider than time and resources available. To help priorities the committee should consider the following criteria:
- Whether overview & scrutiny develop an effective outcome / impact
  - Degree of fit with corporate or community strategy priorities
  - Public concern
  - Stakeholder or partner concern
  - Scope for efficiency gains
  - Is there any duplication with other work?
  - Timing & resources
- 3.4 Members of the committee may also wish to visit services as part of their role. This could include visits to children's centres, pupil referral units or youth projects. This would give members a better understanding of how frontline services operate and provide an opportunity to talk to service users.
- 3.5 The Executive Portfolio Holder for Children and Families has been invited to give an overview of the Administrations priority on 'youth' and what this will mean for young people in Brent. The committee may also wish to consider the best way it can contribute to this priority area.
- 3.6 A draft work programme for 2008/9 containing a number of suggested areas for review is set out in **Appendix A**

### **Contact Officers**

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