

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

FULL COUNCIL – 19 APRIL 2004

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Overview Protocol

The Overview Committee agreed a new protocol which aims to improve the process of the operation of task groups in the light of experience.

Work Programme

The Overview Committee considered various suggested topics for investigation by task groups over the next six months. The selection of topics had been made either for their contribution to taking forward aspects of the Corporate Strategy 2002-2006, Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) priorities, or, where issues had been raised during previous task groups' work and deemed to merit further investigation. Members were asked to suggest additional topics and then all those topics before the Committee were prioritised. The three topics selected as future task groups, which should make their final report in September 2004 were:

- a) Meeting the Demand for Childcare Places
- b) Encouraging Household Recycling
- c) Supporting Access to Financial Services for Excluded Groups

The remaining topics will be kept on a list to be considered again upon the completion of these three.

Existing Task Groups

The progress made so far by the Post Office Closures Task Group was noted and a particular process for agreeing their final report was agreed, given the tight deadline for submitting representations to Post Offices Limited.

The final report from the Task Group that had looked at Consultative Forums over the last three months was received and it was agreed that the recommendations within it should be submitted to the Executive. It is hoped that this piece of work can ensure that the Council makes better use of what comes out of the forums and demonstrate to the public that what is discussed at forums is heard and acted upon.

A draft report was received from the Quality of Life for Older People Task Group and an amended version will be submitted to the Executive. Updates were also received from the Housing Density and Urban Impact Overview Task Group and Tuberculosis Task Group and we look forward to their final recommendations.

Member Consultation

Last year, the Overview Committee developed a protocol for consulting with Members that was incorporated into the Constitution in May 2003. However, there remain concerns that it is not being wholly fulfilled and therefore proposals have been submitted for improving this position. These proposals include publicity within the Council, an officer training programme and a Members' seminar. The Overview Committee will be keeping a close eye on the progress of these initiatives.

Progress of Reports

Finally, the Committee considered what should happen to a report once its recommendations were agreed by the Overview Committee. That is, how it should be put to the Executive and how the Overview Committee would be advised as to whether the Executive agreed resources to it. It was felt that, as the Overview Committee was a body producing policy recommendations, it was appropriate for the Executive to give a considered response to them and to include an action plan on implementation where appropriate. Councillor Kagan was present at the meeting and indicated that the Executive would be happy to provide more feedback. The Committee welcomed this and awaits a more formal response at its next meeting.

Councillor N Nerva
Chair, Overview Committee