

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

FULL COUNCIL – 30TH OCTOBER 2006

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

This is my first report to Council and I am pleased to be able to update Members on the establishment of the new overview and scrutiny structure and to report from the first meetings held.

As Members know, Full Council agreed in June to combine the overview and scrutiny function and the first meeting of the new Overview and Scrutiny Committee took place on 19th October 2006. Members heard from the Director of Policy and Regeneration on the role of Overview and Scrutiny and an explanation of the new structure. The Committee went on to consider the development of its work programme and agreed to establish two task groups to look at a tourism strategy for Brent and the relationship between the voluntary sector and the Council including voluntary sector funding.

The Performance and Finance Select Committee met on 12th September and heard from the Assistant Director, Policy and Regeneration Unit, on the performance management arrangements currently operating in Brent and the regular performance data and information that would be presented to the select committee during the year. Members asked that the waste management contract be brought forward as an area of work to be included in the select committee's work programme and the date of the next meeting of the select committee has been re-arranged to 9th November to accommodate this. The select committee also considered the performance of Council Tax collections and looked at performance in relation to the Housing Benefit Service.

The Forward Plan Select Committee met on 26th September and considered the decisions on two items that had been called-in. On the item *Promoting Day Opportunities for Adults with Disabilities*, the select committee expressed the view that the quality of the service for all users and carers should be maintained. On considering the *Revenue Budget 2006/07 Monitoring* report the select committee felt that consultation should take place on any proposed frontline service savings, that charging for day care and transport for clients and increased parking charges should be rescinded and the reviews of the youth service, Brent Crossroads and voluntary sector grants should not threaten the provision of these services. These views were reported back to the Executive on 9th October. The select committee next meets on 25th October when it will receive further information on a number of items contained in the Forward Plan.

The Health Select Committee met on 4th October and heard from the Chief Executive of the Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust's application to become a Foundation Trust (FT) and why FT status was being sought. Input into a formal response from the Council was agreed. The select committee considered a number of other matters and received an update on the Brent tPCT savings programme for 2006/07. Members made suggestions for a future work programme which will be reported back to the next meeting.

Finally, the first meeting of the new Budget Panel will be on 26th October when members will be asked to agree the work programme of the panel for 2006/07. The only other element of the overview and scrutiny structure still to meet is the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee which meets on 9th November.

**Councillor Dorman Long,
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee**