



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

22nd July 2008

Report from the Director of Policy & Regeneration

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out options for the Overview & Scrutiny work programme for 2008/9

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members of the Committee agree a work programme for 2008/9

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 done as in depth task groups, issue specific meetings, or short discrete agenda items. In all cases the Overview & Scrutiny Committee has the power to require the attendance of the council's Executive and officers to answer questions at their meetings. 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'.

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 prioritise 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 To assist the development of a work programme for 2008/9 a number of suggestions are set out in appendix A. Some of the items follow up on previous work or are requests made by the committee during the last municipal year. These include receiving an annual report on the activities of the Local Strategic Partnership and following up on the customer contact service transformation.

3.5 Others are recommendations from other sources. For instance the Budget Panel made a recommendation:

That, in light of the wider issues that will arise from both implementation of the review of day care and adult care transformational, and potential implications for the budget if they cannot be implemented, these reviews are referred to another panel of the council for consideration.

It is proposed that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee use its October meeting to look at this issue by:

- making a pre meeting visit to an adult day care centre, meeting users and finding out about best practice elsewhere
- Then at the meeting reviewing emerging proposals, reviewing the consultation that has taken place and making suggestions for further consultation.

The Budget Panel also recommended:

That the further provision of recycling facilities should be considered alongside the introduction of compulsory waste recycling as a way of increasing recycling rates and reducing waste going to land-fill.

The Budget Panel was particularly concerned that the lack of recycling facilities in some properties in the borough, particularly flats would hinder progress. It is suggested that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee look at how to increase participation in recycling, with particular focus on flats. The committee could start this work in July and continue over subsequent meetings if required.

- 3.6 When agreeing the roll out of Neighbourhood Working, the Constitutional Working Group was keen that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee plays a role in monitoring the scheme. It is therefore proposed that a Neighbourhood Working Annual Report is brought to this Committee in December 2008.
- 3.7 At the last meeting of this committee it was suggested that further information on how the suggested work programme topic fit with the Corporate Strategy be provided. A brief outline of this can be found at appendix B.
- 3.8 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee currently has three task groups underway. These are:
- Climate Change Task Group
 - Transition Services for 18-21's Task Group
 - Local Bus Routes to Health Sites in Brent – a joint task group with the Health Select Committee
- 3.9 At the last meeting of this Committee a proposal to set up another task group to investigate Legal Service Commission reforms was discussed. Members asked for further information before making a decision and an outline scope is attached at appendix C.

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

Background Papers

Budget Panel Final Report March 2008

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