



**Overview & Scrutiny Committee**  
27<sup>th</sup> May 2009

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

Wards Affected: ALL

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme**

**1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report sets out a long list of items for inclusion in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2009/10.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decide which items they would like to include in their work programme for 2009/10.
- 2.2 The committee should also consider the two task group scopes and decide which task group they wish to start once ongoing work has been completed.

**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 scrutinise different subject areas in different ways depending on the subject size and the depth of investigation required. This can be done by in depth task groups, issue specific meetings, or short discrete agenda items. In all cases the Overview and 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 Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 also gave overview and scrutiny committees power 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 and scrutiny investigation will lead to an effective outcome / impact
  - The degree of fit with corporate or community strategy priorities
  - Public concern
  - Stakeholder or partner concern
  - Scope for efficiency gains
  - Whether it duplicates other work?
  - Time and resources
- 3.4 To help the committee put together its work programme for 2009/10 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. Others are items new to the committee that are likely to become issues for the council during the next 12 months.
- 3.5 There are a number of items that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed in 2008/09 for inclusion in the work programme in 2009/10. They included:
- Regular updates from the Leader of the council on progress in achieving the administrations priorities. The next update is scheduled to take place in July 2009.
  - An introduction to the work of the Business Transformation Directorate from Graham Ellis. This is also included in the draft work programme for July 2009.
  - Learning disabilities day centres – the results of the consultation with service users, plus proposals on how the service will be taken forward. This is scheduled for October 2009, and a visit to a day centre could be arranged to correspond with this item.
- 3.6 The chair of the committee has added a number of issues to the work programme. They include:
- Implementation of the new fees and charges for Adult Social Care and the impact that this has had on service users and their carers.
  - An assessment of the direct payments support and advice service contract.
- 3.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also has a number of ongoing task groups that will be finished in 2009/10. Updates on these task groups are included as separate agenda items for this meeting. Before more task groups are started the ongoing task groups will need to be completed.
- 3.8 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should spend time at the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> May discussing the items listed in appendix A, and deciding which to include in the work programme and which to disregard. It is important to acknowledge there isn't the time or resources to consider all issues of concern and as a result issues have to be prioritised. Members also need to keep

some space in the work programme because issues will inevitably arise during the course of the year that require scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

#### **4.0 Task Group Scopes**

4.1 Although current task groups need to be completed before new task groups can begin, officers have prepared two task group scoping documents for members to consider. They are:

- Services for people with learning disabilities
- Role of councillors in re-invigorating democracy in Brent

4.2 The scoping documents are attached to this report at appendices B & C and provide more information on each of these subject areas. The committee should consider these scopes and decide which it wishes to look at in a task group once ongoing work has been completed.

#### **5.0 Financial Implications**

5.1 None

#### **6.0 Legal Implications**

6.1 None

#### **7.0 Diversity Implications**

7.1 None

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

8.1 None

#### **Contact Officers**

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