

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 14th JULY 2010

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Under the Council's Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must report annually to the Council documenting the Committee's activities during the past year.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered and approved its annual report for the year 2009-10 at the meeting of the Committee held on 6th April 2010. The annual report is attached for Members' information.
- 1.3 This report also proposes that an additional co-opted position be created on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to provide for a third Parent Governor representative to serve on the Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Council note the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2009-10 as attached.
- 2.2 That the number of positions for Parent Governor representative co-options to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be increased from two to three; and the Committee's terms of reference at Part 3.3.2 of the Council's Constitution and the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules at Part 4.5 of the Constitution be amended accordingly.

3. THE ANNUAL REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee co-ordinates all of the scrutiny activity within the Council. Alongside the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, there are six Scrutiny Leads: one each for the five Community Plan themes, with a further Lead for Excellent Public Services. Under the

Council's Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny must submit an annual report of its work to Council. This is attached.

- 3.2 The Annual Report outlines the work of both the Committee and the Scrutiny Leads and their working groups during the municipal year 2009-10. It highlights the constructive policy development role that scrutiny undertakes through its reviews. It also outlines the ongoing progress that has been made in embedding overview and scrutiny within the Council. Pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet reports continues to encourage greater debate around key issues, while call-ins have been debated in a rigorous manner at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The majority of the work programme agreed at the start of the year has been delivered.
- 3.3 Following presentation to the Council, the annual report will be circulated widely within the Council and to its partners. A summary article will also be placed in East End Life.

4. CO-OPTIONS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 4.1 By law the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must include in its membership a number of voting co-opted members in respect of education matters as follows:-
- One Church of England diocese representative;
 - One Roman Catholic diocese representative; and
 - Up to five Parent Governor representatives elected in accordance with procedures set out in the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001.
- 4.2 These representatives may also speak but not vote on other (i.e. non-educational) matters.
- 4.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may also include additional co-opted member(s) in a non-voting capacity and in this regard Tower Hamlets has co-opted a Muslim community representative to the committee.
- 4.4 With regard to the Parent Governor representatives, the regulations allow for up to five co-optees to be appointed, each with a term of office of no less than two years and no more than four years.
- 4.5 Currently the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules provide for only two such representatives to be co-opted to the Committee. Following the development of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Co-opted Member Guidelines and considerable interest shown by parent governors to be involved in the scrutiny process, it is recommended that this number be increased to three.

5. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

- 5.1 By virtue of Section 21 Local Government Act 2000 the Council has a duty to deliver effective and robust overview and scrutiny of the discharge of executive functions through the medium of one or more Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 5.2 Article 6.03 (d) of the Constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must report annually to the Council on its work. This report fulfils that obligation.
- 5.3 In relation to the proposed additional parent governor co-opted position, the legal implications of the proposal are set out in the main body of the report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.
- 6.2 The report details a summary by Scrutiny Lead Members of their overview and scrutiny work during the civic year 2009/10. The reviews include value for money issues that allow monitoring of the use of resources by the Council and as evidence to the Audit Commission's assessment of how well it is managing and using its resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people.
- 6.3 Any financial implications arising from specific Overview and Scrutiny reviews and recommendations as set out in the annual report will be reported to the appropriate executive decision-making body when those recommendations are considered.

7. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Equal opportunities are central to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A number of reports and reviews, including Reducing Worklessness, English for Speakers of Other Languages and Strengthening Local Community Leadership, have specific equalities or anti-poverty themes and make proposals that seek to reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for our local residents.

8. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 8.1 There are no direct implications.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report.