

Committee	Date	Classification	Report No.	Agenda Item No.
Overview and Scrutiny	28th July 2009	Unrestricted		10.1
Report of: Assistant Chief Executive Originating Officer(s): Michael Keating, Service Head Scrutiny & Equalities, Afazul Hoque, Acting Scrutiny Policy Manager Judith Colvin, Communities in Control Project Co-ordinator		Title: Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2009/10 Ward(s) affected: All		

Special Circumstances and Reasons for Urgency

The report was unavailable for public inspection within the standard timescales set out in the Authority's Constitution, because of the continued dialogue between Scrutiny Leads and Cabinet Members and Directorates on areas for scrutiny reviews. It is important that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees their work programme as soon as possible to ensure the work can be completed within the municipal year.

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2009/10 with proposals for implementing a pilot for the Councillor Call for Action.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and comment on the proposed work programme.
- 2.2 Comment on proposals for developing a local model for the Councillor Call for Action which is linked to an improved analysis of all issues of concern raised by public. The aim is to strengthen how we demonstrate our 'duty to involve' and 'promote democracy' by focussing on problem-solving that utilises the community leadership of Members and the managerial responsibilities of officers in a more sophisticated manner. See paragraphs 4.1 – 4.11, Appendix 3.
- 2.3 Comment on proposals to improve working relationship with our partners both in terms of how they use and engage with the scrutiny process as well as how they may themselves be the subject of scrutiny. See paragraphs 4.5-5.5.
- 2.4 Authorise the Head of Scrutiny and Equalities after consultation with the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to finalise the work programme.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)

LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Background paper

N/A

Name and telephone number of and address where open to inspection

Afazul Hoque
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3. Background

3.1 Over the last three years, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) has agreed and largely delivered on its annual work programme. This has helped:

- Strengthen scrutiny's contribution to the Council's improvement agenda and achieve outcomes that benefit the community
- Improve the co-ordination, management and continuity of work both of the Committee itself and its reviews and investigations.

3.2 In 2008 this strength was recognised by the Audit Commission in the Council's Corporate Assessment. The inspectors assessed that scrutiny in Tower Hamlets makes a real and positive difference. This judgement validates how scrutiny has grown and flourished locally and also should give us the confidence to build and develop this year's and future years' work programmes.

3.3 In 2008/09 OSC work programme included the following reviews/ challenge sessions:

Reviews

- Early Intervention, Child Protection
- Child Poverty
- Parental Engagement in Secondary Education
- Alcohol Misuse amongst Young People
- Affordable Homeownership
- End of Life Care

Challenge Sessions

- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

3.4 The Committee also considered a number of issues at its monthly meetings including:

- Performance monitoring reports such as the Strategic Plan Monitoring, Diversity and Equality Action Plan, Members Enquiries and Complaints
- Budget and policy framework items including the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 and Crime and Drugs Reduction Partnership Plan 2008-2011
- Submitted pre-decision questions on 38 Cabinet reports
- Considered 5 call-ins all of which confirmed Cabinet's original decision after considerable debate.

3.5 As both an evaluation of last year and a preparation for this, a Members' session was held in May. A short note of the event is attached as Appendix 1. Members of OSC and the Health Scrutiny Panel were generally positive about the work undertaken last year. They were keen to improve public engagement and awareness of the scrutiny process in particular through arranging review working group meetings outside the Town Hall. In addition, they wanted to see further engagement and involvement of all Members to ensure that scrutiny is truly a Member-led process. Furthermore, the Scrutiny Policy Team undertook evaluation surveys with the review Directorate lead officers and a short note of this is attached in Appendix 2. Colleagues in directorates raised similar issues in regards to public engagement and Member-led scrutiny. These issues have been addressed in the development of this year's programme.

4. COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION (CCfA)

- 4.1 Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 includes provisions for CCfA that came into force on 1st April 2009. This means the Council is now under statutory obligation to provide Members the opportunity to refer to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) any local government matter where other methods of resolution have been exhausted.
- 4.2 In its aspiration to empower local councillors to respond more effectively to the needs of their communities, the CCfA fits closely with our realisation of the Community Plan, particularly its overarching theme of 'One Tower Hamlets'. CCfA offers a key opportunity to coordinate activity across the three objectives of One Tower Hamlets: reducing inequality, strengthening cohesion, and strengthening community leadership. Looking ahead to CAA, CCfA will also be a key tool in building a sense of people and place, and helping to deliver better outcomes for residents.
- 4.3 It has been a key piece of work for the Communities in Control project board to explore what CCfA should look like locally to realise these objectives by setting a workable system within the wider context of how residents can raise their concerns with us and further enhance how we 'involve' them more widely. This gives us the opportunity to:
- Improve how residents can get a say in what's happening particularly about what's not working
 - Refine and refresh our systems for raising concerns to improve their operation and ensure that they actually produce better results
 - Improve the information we provide to councillors about what is not working and the major issues arising from this in order to use their community leadership as part of the problem-solving process
- 4.4 At the same time it is important to avoid the creation of a bureaucratic process. Success will also be dependent on the willingness of officers and Members to adopt a problem-solving approach that recognises their different perspectives. Getting this right would enable us to have a more sophisticated way of tackling problems and recognising that finding sustainable solutions is often complex. One of the lessons from the pilot Members' Diversity and Equality Working Group has been how this approach can be more energising.
- 4.5 Key guidance from the Centre for Public Scrutiny suggests that the best authorities will use this opportunity to look more generally at all the ways in which Councillors are empowered to resolve problems local to their ward, with CCfA as a last resort once all other processes have been exhausted. At the same time we need to be mindful that this 'last resort' is itself relative to the effectiveness of how services respond overall.
- 4.6 In larger terms, this necessitates clarifying what all the processes for raising concerns are, how they relate to each other, and making sure they are as effective as possible. The aspiration is for a robust process to exist as an entirety, with issues that would benefit from extra attention from scrutiny being able to rise to the surface, whilst those issues which are best dealt with through others means being signposted accordingly. Consideration of CCfA therefore needs to be set in this context. The production of good quality management information from which Councillors can work in a problem-solving capacity to understand and solve important issues for the community is crucial to ensure that CCfA does not end up as something used all the time. Not only could

this expend a considerable amount of additional energy it also could undermine what services should be doing all the time – put right what is not working.

- 4.7 This will enhance the power of CCfA as a last resort if no feasible solution can be found. The Ward Member would be a clear champion for an issue raised directly from their ward, where all established grievance have failed to solve the problem.
- 4.8 A proposal for the system in its entirety is included at Appendix 3. The Council needs to ensure that the right processes and structures are in place to help implement the CCfA appropriately. It will be important however to pilot these models to evaluate and reflect on their functionality before full implementation. It is therefore suggested that any structures and processes described below are piloted for the remainder of 2009/10, with a view to full implementation beginning after April 2010.
- 4.9 It is proposed that the joint information gleaned from complaints, petitions, members' enquiries and FOI requests is pooled into one performance report that can be used both corporately and by councillors to spot patterns and problem-solve on behalf of the community. The aspiration is that this tool allows analysis of these issues of concerns to go further than a description of numbers and types, and moves instead towards a more holistic understanding of resident satisfaction and their views of services. The report would be prepared at six-monthly intervals for use at OSC to consider issues strategically. A local version of the same report would at the same time be presented to the LAP Steering Groups. The combination of the two would aim to ensure that both neighbourhood and borough-wide aspects are covered. A key concern is that the report is conducive to problem solving analysis and is accessible to Councillors and community representatives. This information should be framed around residents' satisfaction rather than a prescriptive description of number and type of complaints. It is proposed that OSC will consider the first joint performance report in December 2009.
- 4.10 The link with the LAP Steering Groups is important because it enables a quick and direct way to respond to local needs. The potential strength of the system is to ensure that a proper all-embracing attempt has been made to deal with issues. This would ensure that the CCfA process is used to address those issues which are truly intractable and highlight their significance more strongly.
- 4.11 Production of this report may pose challenges in terms of streamlining IT systems and coordinating reporting schedules across different service areas. However this type of joined-up understanding of residents' concerns informed by all our mechanisms is unparalleled currently, and poses a huge opportunity for the Council to understand more precisely the concerns of the community.

5. SCRUTINY OF PARTNERSHIP

- 5.1 Sections 19 and 20 of the Police Justice Act 2006 require every local authority to have a Crime and Disorder Committee with the power to review or scrutinise decisions made by Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP). The Council's constitution has been amended to incorporate this function to the OSC's terms of reference. This came into force in April 2009 with the publication of guidance for local authorities and CDRPs. Over recent years the OSC has already undertaken work looking at the CDRP. For instance when the Cabinet Member for Cleaner, Greener and Safer is the subject of the Scrutiny Spotlight the Borough Commander has also attended alongside the Corporate Director for Communities, Localities & Culture. A number of scrutiny reviews have also focused on the work of the CDRP and the Committee comments on key policy documents as well as monitoring performance targets of the CDRP within the LAA

targets and TH Index. Work is currently underway to formalise this relationship and build on the work undertaken so far.

- 5.2 “Communities in Control” looks to enhance the visibility of scrutiny within the Council and the wider partnership. Over the last few years the scrutiny function has developed good working relations with local health partners. In a similar vein to the performance analysis described above work is in train to improve complaints information presented at Health Scrutiny Panel to enable a more co-ordinated and comprehensive analysis of the types of complaints and develop a more holistic understanding of key health issues facing local residents.
- 5.3 The changing role of community leaders with more emphasis on leadership of place rather than services highlights the potential for scrutiny in influencing and shaping the local area. With many services being jointly provided or commissioned scrutiny of partnership will be an area of growing interest for non-executive councillors looking to improve the overall quality of life for residents. Furthermore, for CAA strengthening the role of scrutiny in improving outcomes and bringing service providers to account is vital to our performance management framework. The ongoing work of the Communities in Control Board as well as the proposed review by the Scrutiny Lead for One Tower Hamlets on community leadership will provide greater understanding about how we make this happen.
- 5.4 In looking to improve partnership working it is proposed that as part of this year’s review on reducing youth offending the Young Mayor and the Deputy Young Mayor will be co-opted onto the Working Group to work with Members. Discussions have already been held with colleagues in Children’s Services and this is an area where the Young Mayor is also keen to get involved with Members.
- 5.5 The Safe and Supportive Delivery Group at their meeting on 9th July 2009 considered the implications of Sections 19 and 20 of the Police Justice Act 2006 and the draft proposals for CCfA. The Group welcomed the proposals but felt further discussions were needed with the Partnership Executive to ensure the wider partnership were aware of this new responsibility.

6. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 6.1 A draft 2009/10 “Forward Plan” for OSC is attached at Appendix 4. This is based on the schedule of reports and issues considered in 2008/09. Amongst the issues the Committee will consider are:
 - Regular monitoring reports such as the Tower Hamlets Index and the six-monthly Strategic Plan monitoring report;
 - Budget and policy framework items such as the Gambling Policy and Revenue Budget preparation
- 6.2 Call-ins and pre-decision scrutiny are dependent on Cabinet decisions and reports and these need to be programmed in when they arise. OSC also considers the reports arising from its investigations and reviews before they are passed through to Cabinet and again, these will be added when they arise. Twice a year the Committee will also monitor the recommendations arising from scrutiny reviews through their recommendation tracking report. This year each Scrutiny Lead will identify within their portfolio a review from a previous year to meet with officers and check progress.

- 6.3 The Committee has a monthly Scrutiny Spotlight session for all Lead Members which was highlighted as an excellent way of holding the Cabinet to account in the evaluation sessions over the last few years. The relevant Cabinet Member and Directors attend to present the key performance challenges within their individual portfolios, focusing on issues arising from the TH Index. This assists in meeting CAA criteria by demonstrating how OSC is holding the Executive to account but there remains further work to do in ensuring that the Scrutiny Leads are themselves proactive in understanding the performance issues within their own portfolio areas.

Reviews and Challenge Sessions

- 6.4 To help develop this year's work programme Members held an Away Day in June to discuss areas for scrutiny reviews. Seven Members of the Committee attended and considered the challenges facing scrutiny in light of new legislation and the implications for managing this during the final year of the current administration. Creating a realistic timetable to complete the work programme will be one of the challenges.
- 6.5 Appendix 5 outlines the investigations, reviews and challenge sessions that Overview and Scrutiny could undertake this year. As last year, these will focus on the Council's improvement agenda and contribute to achieving outcomes that benefit the community. In addition, the topics aspire to help address the Council's value for money agenda and build the community leadership role of non-executive councillors. They are based on performance issues raised throughout 2008/09, outcomes from the Committee's own work and an analysis of the Strategic and Community Plans among other key documents. Discussions have taken place between the Scrutiny Leads and Directorates to explore challenges faced by services where OSC could add value to existing work. The outcome of these discussions and analysis is reflected in the proposed programme.
- 6.6 Research into effective scrutiny has highlighted the importance of members' commitment and enthusiasm to undertaking their work. They need to believe that their work will impact positively upon their constituents' lives and help solve the problems presented at their surgeries and other community forums. The Work Programme therefore aspires to address the objective criteria as described in Appendix 5 as well as reflecting the members' consideration of their respective OSC work areas.
- 6.7 It is envisaged that over the next year there will be up to six reviews and three challenge sessions with others added throughout the year, subject to resources. This represents a manageable work programme which allows all the OSC portfolio holders to be involved as well as ensuring there is joint working. It is worth stressing that there is some flexibility built into the programme. This ensures capacity if the regular monitoring at OSC indicates a need to either remove or add items. This includes the following reviews and challenge sessions which are explained further in Appendix 5:

Reviews

- Community Leadership – Scrutiny Lead One Tower Hamlets (Cllr Ann Jackson)
- Reducing Youth Offending – Scrutiny Lead Safe and Supportive (Cllr Denise Jones)
- Reducing Worklessness Amongst Young People 16-24 – Scrutiny Lead Prosperous Community (Cllr Abdul Aziz Sardar)
- Private Rented Sector – Scrutiny Lead Great Place to Live (Cllr Alex Heslop)
- Childhood Obesity – Focusing on Prevention – Scrutiny Lead Healthy Communities (Cllr Tim Archer)

Challenge Sessions

- Dangerous Dogs – Scrutiny Lead Excellent Public Services (Cllr Bill Turner)
- Council's Strategic Relationship with RSLs – Scrutiny Lead Great Place to Live (Cllr Alex Heslop)
- Bullying in Schools – Scrutiny Lead Safe and Supportive (Cllr Denise Jones)

- 6.8 The Scrutiny Lead for Excellent Public Services is currently considering topics for his review. In the discussions with the Scrutiny Team he has indicated he would like to undertake some work in a number of areas including the recruitment and retention of children's social care workers which could assist us in responding to the national Social Work Task Force. Once a topic is selected discussions will be held with the relevant Corporate Director to agree the work programme.
- 6.9 In all cases, once the issues are agreed, the scope of the work and timing will be developed in close consultation with the relevant services. This will also ensure that the investigations are focused and can deliver on their objectives. As with the proposed performance analysis, a greater focus will be placed on the problem-solving nature of the work.
- 6.10 The merging of the scrutiny and equalities function has also provided an opportunity to address issues of inequalities more precisely through understanding how Members' community leadership role relates to scrutiny. All scrutiny reviews will consider the equalities and community cohesion implications to contribute to the development of One Tower Hamlets.

7. HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL

- 7.1 The Health Scrutiny Panel has met twice this year and has undertaken induction visits to all the local health trusts. Discussions are also underway with health colleagues to identify key issues which may be useful for the Panel to consider in this municipal year. This includes looking at mental health services for older people and development of health centre in St Andrews site. Following this, a work programme will be developed for the Panel's consideration at their next meeting on 20th October 2009. This will build on the four year work programme agreed in 2006/07 with the key theme of reducing health inequalities. Following the previous reviews on access to GP / Dentistry Services, Tobacco Cessation and End of Life Care the Panel Chair has agreed to undertake a review on Childhood Obesity focusing on prevention work. This will build on the previous scrutiny review on childhood obesity undertaken in 2005/06 which focused on increasing understanding of issues around obesity and actions that can be taken to deal effectively with reducing childhood obesity within the borough.
- 7.2 As with previous work programmes it will include service visits, briefings on key issues, consultation on reviews or changes to services as well participation in the Annual Health Check process which is an assessment of local health trusts by the Healthcare Commission. The development of Tower Hamlets Involvement Network also provides further opportunity to engage local residents in the work of the Panel and two members from the Network have been co-opted onto the Panel.
- 7.3 The Panel will be involved in a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee alongside Newham, Hackney and City of London which will consider the proposals from clinical review of health services for North East London. This will include recommendations on how local health services can be strengthened to improve clinical quality and outcomes and deliver the aspirations set out in "A Framework for Action", Lord Darzi's review of

healthcare services in London. Three Members from Tower Hamlets will be appointed to the Joint Committee.

- 7.4 At the end of this municipal year the Panel will evaluate the work of Health Scrutiny over the last four years to consider how it has contributed to reducing health inequalities and more importantly whether their recommendations have translated to change in services for local residents.

8. COMMUNICATION AND PROFILE OF SCRUTINY

- 8.1 To maintain good communication about Overview and Scrutiny's work, it is proposed to circulate regular updates on the Work Programme considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Corporate Management Team and Cabinet. This is provisionally scheduled for November and April 2009. The update will cover all aspects of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme including call-ins, performance monitoring and Budget and Policy Framework items. A short summary of the OSC and Health Scrutiny Panel meetings will also be placed in the Members Bulletin.
- 8.2 All Scrutiny Reviews will be publicised through East End Life and seek to engage and involve local residents in the process. In addition, scrutiny meetings will be held outside the Town Hall where appropriate to improve access for local residents.
- 8.3 As a number of the reviews cut across the work of the Tower Hamlets Partnership, discussions have taken place around presenting the review reports to the relevant Community Plan Delivery Groups. Over the last few years this proved useful when the Living Well and Learning Achievement CPAGs were consulted prior to the beginning of the reviews on Choice Based Lettings Scheme and Young People's participation in Sports Leading up to the Olympics.
- 8.4 A number of review meetings and Challenge Sessions will be held outside the Town Hall to encourage local residents' involvement. The Dangerous Dogs Challenge Session has been arranged for 4th August 2009 at the Tramshed in Digby Street and has been publicised widely amongst local residents and the partnership. This will increase the profile of scrutiny amongst local residents.
- 8.5 At Full Council Meeting on 15th July 2009 a deputation was received regarding the cuts in Tower Hamlets College. This matter has been referred to OSC for their consideration and a Challenge Session will be arranged to consider the issues highlighted by the deputes.

9 CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

- 9.1 The Local Government Act 2000 places a duty on the Council to deliver a robust and effective overview and scrutiny function. The Committee's work programme is a contributory element towards discharging that responsibility. There are no other immediate legal implications.

10 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 10.1 This report details the proposed work programme of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. All costs involved in achieving this work programme will need to be met from within existing budgetary provisions.

10.2 The reviews will also consider value for money issues which will enable members to contribute to monitoring the use of resources as part of the Council's wide efficiency programme. This work programme will also provide evidence of the Council's value for money arrangements for the purposes of the Audit Commission's use of resources assessment on how well the Councils is managing and using its resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people.

11 ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

11.1 Equalities consideration are central to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and this is reflected in the monitoring the Council's progress in its Diversity and Equality Action Plan twice a year. Furthermore all scrutiny reviews will give specific consideration to One Tower Hamlets issues. In particular the review on community leadership will focus on how we can further develop our community leaders to reduce inequalities and the review on reducing worklessness will partly focus on unemployment amongst women.

12 RISK MANAGEMENT

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

Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) Evaluation 2008/09 19th May 2009

Present

Cllr Abdul Asad – *Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

Cllr Stephanie Eaton – *Scrutiny Lead for Healthy Communities and Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel*

Cllr Alex Heslop – *Member of Health Scrutiny Panel*

Cllr Ahmed Hussain – *Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

Cllr Sirajul Islam – *incoming Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

Cllr Waiseul Islam – *Scrutiny Lead for a Great Place to Live*

Cllr Denise Jones – *Member of 2 Scrutiny Reviews*

Cllr Oliur Rahman – *Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

Cllr Abdul Aziz Sardar – *Scrutiny Lead for Prosperous Communities*

1. Background

In keeping with evaluations of Overview and Scrutiny carried out in previous years, the aims of the session were to consider:

- areas where the O&S function performed well
- areas where there further development would increase effectiveness
- how to improve participation in and ownership of scrutiny
- how to improve stakeholder satisfaction with the scrutiny process

2. Key statistics and comparative information

The group were presented with key statistics about Overview and Scrutiny's work programme for 2008/09 and Members' participation in the scrutiny process, and a summary of the areas highlighted for improvement in 2008/9. This enabled an assessment to be made about where changes had been made and where action was required in the future. Views expressed on each are incorporated in the sections below.

3. Scrutiny's work programme

Reviews

In line with the previous year's proposal, there was one review fewer in 2008/9, but Members still felt that the workload was not spread sufficiently across the year. Reviews were perceived as starting later this year than previously, possibly because of capacity issues. A further dissatisfaction with reviews generally lay with the amount of time that it could take (up to six weeks) before a topic and its work programme could be finally agreed with officers, which some Members saw as time lost.

There was also some concern about the choice of review topics and whether there was more scope for the process being both more Member-led and more responsive to residents' concerns – although it was noted that the 'Alcohol Misuse Amongst Young People' review, for example, was an important issue for residents, and that the choice of review topics is based on residents' satisfaction survey data.. This review was also cited as an example where it would have been useful to have greater clarity at the outset of a review as to what its outcomes were intended to be, given the likelihood that most recommendations for action would be directed to external partnership agencies rather than the Council.

Other reviews specifically mentioned as examples of working well were 'Child Poverty', with its innovative methods of interviewing local residents which had opened up lots of questions;

'End of Life Care', which had made a number of site visits to gather information; 'Early Intervention, Child Protection', which had visited children's homes; and 'Parental Engagement in Secondary Education', which had offered opportunities for engaging with parents.

The final point raised about reviews was the view that once a report had been drafted, it should be widely consulted on before being submitted to the OSC. Against this, it was noted that there is the provision for deputations to the OSC should residents or groups feel that they wish to challenge a report (or part of it), and that consulting widely in order to be fully transparent would take some time.

4. Scrutiny processes

Call-ins

The number of call-ins fell this year to 5, compared to 16 in 2007/8 and 19 in 2006/7, which may have addressed the problem raised by Members last year about overwhelming the scrutiny agenda, although no specific comments were made on this point.

Spotlight sessions

It was noted that during spotlight sessions, which Members last year agreed to continue, Cabinet members (with one notable exception) sometimes relied too much on officers to answer questions on policy and strategy, thus undermining political accountability. In order to maximise the usefulness of the sessions for OSC, it was recommended that a report or briefing should be made available to OSC members about the Cabinet member's areas of responsibility, with relevant monitoring data, in advance. This would enable Committee members to focus on areas for scrutiny and prepare lines of questioning, and begin this straight away as soon as the agenda item is taken.

It was also noted (by e-mail correspondence) that:

- Performance monitoring data is now presented in a much more user friendly and helpful way
- Some Members appeared to be using prepared questions not shared with other Members, but using their own experience might be a way of providing a stronger 'critical friend' challenge
- Preparing for spotlight sessions is hampered when Cabinet reports are listed as 'to follow', cutting down on the amount of time available for Member preparation

5. Members' needs and participation

Support for Members

There was praise for officers for their work in compiling information for Scrutiny Leads and facilitating the scrutiny reviews, and for support given to the OSC.

Members' participation

The key point was how to increase Member participation in scrutiny. Members acknowledged the picture presented to them at the start of the meeting: that in a few of the reviews, the workload was falling on two to three who regularly attended all the meetings, while in other s variable attendance meant that all Members were unable to fully consider all the evidence being submitted. A factor identified here was clearly the large number of council meetings that Members had to attend – despite the intention of the Local Government Act 2000 which set up the Executive-Scrutiny system – and the number of external/ ward meetings that they also have to attend.

The Chair of Overview & Scrutiny explained how much time he had to devote to ringing and e-mailing Members to try to ensure sufficient attendance at OSC. The Conservative Group had also not been represented at OSC for about the first half of the year, thus losing an alternative perspective at the meetings, which some saw as weakening performance during 2008/09.

It was noted that chasing Members to attend meetings was probably something the new Chair and the Scrutiny Leads would continue to need to do this year, given competing demands on time and the fact that 2010 is an election year. When they do this, it was recommended they focus on why Members should attend, the purpose of a particular meeting and its potential impact and outcome.

A number of other suggestions were made to tackle the problem of Member participation:

- While there was no desire to see all scrutiny agendas circulated to Members, it was noted that the Members' Bulletin does not mention the OSC and challenge sessions. While the old Bulletin was seen as more successful at providing information, it was recommended that the new Bulletin could be better used to explain very briefly the purpose of meetings and 'hook' people in
- The issue needs to be discussed with the Party Whips - it was noted that Opposition Members need to be convinced that scrutiny is a genuinely non-partisan process in order to maximise their participation
- Chairs of reviews need to continue to be flexible in arranging meetings

These steps would need to be taken in order to address fully one of last year's recommendations, 'Ensure consistency in membership of different panels so Members can build on expertise in areas e.g. Health Scrutiny Panel'.

6. Public engagement and publicity

The previous year's evaluation had recommended two improvements in this field:

- *Engage more residents by arranging O&S review meetings outside of Town Hall, including the use of community buildings, and encourage deputations*
- *Increase publicity of O&S and its role within the Council, e.g. through road shows and publicity in East End Life*

It was noted that there had been evidence sessions arranged externally but that more could be done in this regard. Ideally, it was felt, external evidence sessions should be held early in a review in order to engage people locally, so that they might be more willing to travel to the Town Hall to attend further review sessions, and this should be scoped into the review's work programme at an early stage to help with publicity.

A number of proposals were made to increase publicity for scrutiny work and public engagement:

- Have more scrutiny publicity materials available
- Use East End Life – but not just this paper
- Use also different media – including radio – with a particular emphasis on BME-targeted media which would be keen to take material
- Use local networks, including 3rd sector networks, to publicise scrutiny reviews,
- Publicise the opportunity residents have to make representations to O & S on items
- The Council's Communications function ought to be assisting Scrutiny's need to engage and link with local residents and communities, as could the Consultation and Engagement Team

- A 'Getting Involved' register of residents willing to serve on things like a 'Citizens' Jury' was also suggested

Co-optees

There was praise for the success of linking the "Future Councillor" initiative with scrutiny, whereby some participants in that initiative, although not formally co-opted onto reviews, attended meetings. They were recognised as being open-minded and unafraid of asking basic questions, as well as tough and critical ones.

It was recommended that co-optees onto O & S should be better integrated into scrutiny, for example by:

- asking them to speak first on some items
- inviting them to give feedback as part of the annual evaluation

7. Considerations for next year's work plan

- the workload should be spread across the year, with reviews starting in a timely manner
- consideration should be given as to how the process might be both more Member-led and more responsive to residents' concerns
- reviews should have greater clarity at the outset as to intended outcomes
- for spotlight sessions, OSC members should receive an advance report or briefing about the Cabinet member's responsibilities, with monitoring data
- Cabinet reports to OSC should arrive on time, so Members can prepare
- the new Members' Bulletin could be better used to interest and engage Members in scrutiny
- scrutiny needs to check it is a genuinely non-partisan process in order to maximise all Members' participation
- Chairs of reviews need to encourage Members to get involved and participate, by contacting them and continuing to arrange meetings flexibly
- more evidence sessions should be arranged externally and scoped into review' work programmes at an early stage to help with publicity
- other, various means to publicise scrutiny work should be used
- co-optees onto O & S should be better integrated

Tim Young
Facilitator
20 May 2009

Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) Staff Evaluation 2008/09

1. Background

This report presents findings of the 2008/09 staff evaluation of scrutiny undertaken with 5 Directorate Lead Officers on scrutiny reviews. The aim of the survey was to consider areas where the O&S function performed well and where further development would increase effectiveness. The report is divided into four sections as outlined below:

2. Preparation for scrutiny meetings and visits

- Overall, officers understood the aims and objectives of the reviews of which they were part. One officer particularly welcomed the review and thought it was a fantastic opportunity for the team and other partners to get involved.
- Only one officer was dissatisfied with the support received from the scrutiny team with the rest being very satisfied or satisfied.
- Generally, officers said that they were satisfactorily briefed prior to meetings. One said that "preparation was comprehensive". However, another felt that there was no briefing. Also that some partners were ill equipped for the meeting and some attendees were not sure of the topics being discussed.
- On the whole, officers felt that they were given enough time to prepare for meetings and were clear as to when and where the meetings would take place.
- However, two said that they did not receive the agenda and relevant paper work at least one week before the meeting.

3. Presenting evidence at scrutiny meetings

- Overall, officers were very satisfied or satisfied that their contribution received full attention by the Working Group.
- All officers understood how their contribution at meetings helped the Working Group meet its objectives.

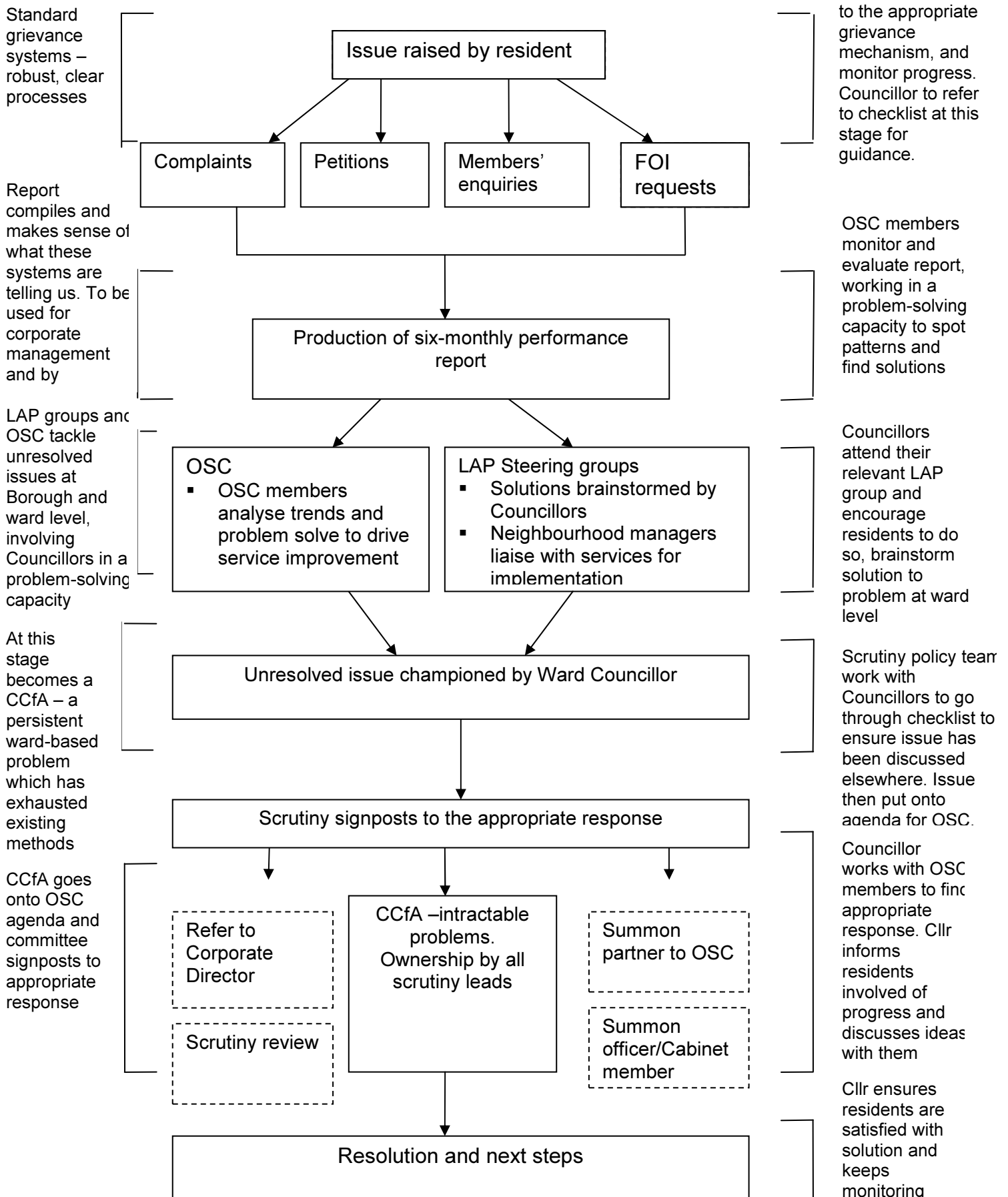
4. Report and recommendations

- Three officers said that they were satisfied that recommendations would improve service delivery. Another felt that recommendations could have been better as nothing new was identified. One officer was not satisfied.
- Overall, all Officers felt that recommendations reflected discussions taken place at scrutiny meetings.
- All Officers agreed that the final report did meet aims and objectives of the review.

5. Considerations for next year's work plan

- More residents to be involved
- A fuller attendance at meetings
- Better planning of review
- Increase liaison with departmental lead officers.

Figure 1 - Overview of revised grievance structure



Implementation of Councillor Call for Action

1. Procedures currently in place

Complaints

- 1.1 Complaints are reported to OSC, CMT, PRG and the Standards Committee and this is a statutory process.
- 1.2 The Complaints process has been externally commended for its clarity. However, differentiation needs to be made between complaints of an individual or one-off nature (i.e., “my bin has not been collected this week”) and those of which are more wide-ranging (i.e., “the bins in my street are never emptied”). This would allow a more sophisticated understanding of the concerns of residents, and the way in which local services are working in different areas.

Petitions

- 1.3 The Local Democracy Bill obliges every Council to devise a Petitions Scheme, and to offer an e-Petition facility. All local service providers will be affected by the forthcoming ‘duty to respond’ to petitions, and community groups and citizens will have a powerful new tool at their disposal.
- 1.4 The Council’s current petitions procedure is in need of revising as it is cumbersome and unclear to those looking to submit a petition. The procedure as it currently stands is confusing to residents, and there is also a lack of tracking of petitions. A facility also needs to be put in place for e-petitions.

Members’ enquiries

- 1.5 The Members’ enquiry system includes tracked information that is fed to Overview and Scrutiny. Members are generally well-versed in the system for putting forward a Member’s enquiry, and use these robustly in this borough – we compare very highly to the rest of London on numbers of enquiries.

Freedom of information requests

- 1.6 Currently the Council is experiencing a dramatic growth in numbers of requests. This information is possible to compile into a performance report, so long as requests are referenced by subject only – complete anonymity would be required.
- 1.7 The merits of compiling these requests would need to be considered. Freedom of Information requests can be made for a variety of reasons, and neither the identity of the applicant nor the purpose for making the request need be known in order to process and answer the request. Some requests are from journalists looking for specific local issues, or to place the local authority in a league table with others. Some will come from commercial organisations looking for competitive advantage at a future procurement. A large number obviously come from residents concerned over a specific issue either affecting them directly or of interest. Motive can be any number of things, from a desire to embarrass the Council, to wanting to gather evidence for a complaint. Currently an informal mechanism where current FOI request subject matter is raised with Corporate Communications means that we can be more prepared for follow up questions on disclosures that are made through this route. All FOI disclosures are reviewed by CMT members prior to issue.

2. Proposed new procedures

Production of performance report

- 2.1 The production of a performance report as discussed in paragraph 3.9 and 3.10 of the report outlines the aspiration that with a robust and innovative process for interpreting issues of concern that is linked integrally to the Tower Hamlets Partnership and is focused on driving service improvement, the need for CCfAs will be limited.

LAP steering groups

- 2.2 There are currently steering groups for each of the 8 LAPs, and paired LAP meetings 6 times a year (3 closed and 3 public meetings). The key link between the steering groups and Council services is through the Neighbourhood Manager, who takes emergent issues from the steering group to the appropriate Council officer. There is currently no clear link between Democratic Services and the steering groups.
- 2.3 The performance report from complaints, members' enquiries and petitions under the proposed model would go to the LAP steering groups either twice at the public meetings, or else on a more ad-hoc basis. This would give ward Councillors an active role in problem-solving before matters go to scrutiny, which would serve to further empower backbench Councillors in solving problems local to their wards. This would also tie the Partnership meaningfully into the new model, and would allow the Council and Ward Councillors to work more closely with partner agencies in a problem-solving capacity.
- 2.4 This model would require legitimising the LAP steering groups to undertake this work. The model would also require ward Councillors to attend every LAP steering group, which should prove to be a knock-on effect from entrenching the groups in overall process.

Scrutiny

- 2.5 The Overview and Scrutiny function would take on a dual role. Firstly, it would monitor and evaluate the performance report from complaints, members' enquiries and petitions that would be presented on a quarterly basis. This would enable Members to maintain an oversight of issues of concern, which could be used to inform the scrutiny work programme more generally.
- 2.6 The second function relates more specifically to the CCfA. Backbench Councillors would refer to Overview and Scrutiny Committee any matters that they cannot find a solution at ward level. The use of checklists used by Councillors to decide whether to champion an issue will be incorporated again at this stage to verify and provide transparency to the process.
- 2.7 Where a problem is really an individual complaint, or sits better with one of the other mechanisms, it will be referred back to these. The Overview and Scrutiny committee will then signpost the issue on to the best method of solution amongst those available to it. Examples of these methods include: referring the issue to the relevant service area for response; undertaking a scrutiny review into the issue; summoning an officer, Cabinet member or external partner to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3. CCfA – Intractable issues

3.1 CCfA is in place where all existing mechanisms to solve a problem have been exhausted. This issue can then be championed by that Councillor and brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.2 It is important that an issue is relevant, appropriate, and that existing procedures are exhausted before an issue is referred to Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Working with officers if necessary, councillors will determine how best to champion the issue, which could include:

- Advising a resident to make an individual complaint
- Raising a Member's enquiry on behalf of resident [s]
- Supporting residents to submit a petition
- Taking the issue to their LAP steering group
- Seeking an apology from the Council/local service involved
- Collecting evidence from their ward to support the issue
- Raising the issue with relevant agencies
- Signpost to relevant Council Committee, if appropriate

This process is similar to that in place currently. However if an issue remains unresolved after comprehensive efforts to deal with the problem through existing grievance procedures, it can be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.3 Once on the Scrutiny agenda, Members will decide what the appropriate response should be. Although brought as a ward-based issue, the solution will be jointly owned by all the scrutiny leads. An example may be a review or challenge session owned jointly by all the Scrutiny Leads, or a one-off scrutiny spot-light session on a particular local service or service provider.

3.4 Checklists would be used to help manage the process. Effectiveness would of course be enhanced if the improvements to the grievance system are in place. It would also be important to determine how officers would help councillors to use the checklists. Given that the referral is to Overview and Scrutiny it makes sense for the Scrutiny Policy Team to take on this responsibility in the first instance.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2009/10 Forward Plan

9 th June 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's Strategic Plan 2006 to 2011 (BPF) • Diversity and Equality Action Plan – End of Year Monitoring Report (PM) • Affordable Homeownership Scrutiny Review Report • Terms of reference and Protocol (OSMM) • Membership / Appointment of Scrutiny Leads (OSMM)
30 th June 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity & Equality Action Plan 2009/10
28 July 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Outlook (BPF) • Annual Complaints Report (PM) • Annual Report 2008/09 – Joint Performance and Financial End of Year Report (PM) • Scrutiny Spotlight – Lead Member Finance and Resources • OSC Work Programme (OSMM)
1 Sep 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan and Corporate Revenue Monitoring Report 2009-10 – Quarter 1 (PM) • Review of Burial Subsidy Scheme • New Executive Arrangements • Scrutiny Spotlight – Lead Member Regeneration, Localisation and Community Partnerships
6 Oct 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tower Hamlets Index (PM) • Third Sector Strategy • OSC Recommendation Tracking Report Update (OSMM) • Scrutiny Spotlight –Lead Member Cleaner, Greener, Safer • OSC Work Programme (OSMM)
3 Nov 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gambling Policy (BPF) • Scrutiny Spotlight – Deputy Leader of the Council
1 Dec 09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan Half Year Monitoring Report 2009-10(PM) • Joint Performance Digest Report- (PM) • Scrutiny Spotlight – Lead Member Employment and Skills • Scrutiny Spotlight – Lead Member Health & Well Being • OSC Work Programme (OSMM)
12 Jan 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity and Equality Action Plan- six month report (PM) • Scrutiny Spotlight – Lead Member Children's Services
9 Feb 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme (BPF) • Budget Requirement and Council Tax (BPF) • Tower Hamlets Index (PM) • Scrutiny Spotlight – Lead Member Culture • OSC Work Programme (OSMM)
9 Mar 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan and Corporate Revenue Monitoring Report 2009-10 – Quarter 3 (PM) • Scrutiny Spotlight – Lead Member Development and Housing • OSC Recommendation Tracking Report Update (OSMM)
6 Apr 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and Young People Plan Refresh 2010-11 (BPF) • Tower Hamlets Index (PM) • Scrutiny Spotlight – Leader of the Council • Annual Report (OSMM)

BPF - Budget and Policy Framework PM - Performance Management OSMM - Overview and Scrutiny Monitoring and Management

Call-ins will be added where accepted. Pre-decision questions are a standing item on the agenda
The Committee will also consider reports arising from the investigations and reviews conducted by the Scrutiny Leads

Criteria and types of review

Against each item on the draft Work Programme, objectives and areas for analysis are indicated and include:

- Methodology – the approach used for the scrutiny investigation
- Performance and Improvement - the links to performance improvement issues and Value For Money (VFM)
- Planned Work – work either currently underway or scheduled, which the scrutiny review may feed into.
- OSC Criteria – how the topic and Members' contribution could improve services

Scrutiny topics are prioritised against defined criteria to ensure that the work:

- would assist in tackling an area of poor or challenging performance (bottom quartile or equivalent) that has priority within the Strategic Plan
- would assist with sustaining high performance that has priority within the Strategic Plan
- would assist in addressing an area of national policy development that has significant implications for the Council and where member input would be valuable
- relates to a planned service inspection and member input would be valuable in providing a robustness test before inspection (or submission of self-assessment)
- would help address a gap between community perception or concern and objective performance by utilising the members' leadership role
- would contribute particularly toward improving VFM

The work will follow one of three different approaches, as follows:

- **Scrutiny Challenge Sessions**
These are one-off sessions chaired by Scrutiny Leads which have to date have proved useful for improving members' understanding of new policies or guidelines or as part of the preparation for an inspection or report. There is potential for these to develop aspects of a particular policy on the subject for future service development work.
- **Reviews**
These are more extensive pieces of work spanning several months. They enable more in-depth research to be undertaken, visits to see practice elsewhere, participation of external experts, etc.
- **Developing the Scrutiny Lead champion role**
In addition to the more formal settings above, it is important for the Scrutiny Leads to develop expertise in championing issues within the work of OSC and with fellow frontline councillors. This would be particularly useful for topics where it is more challenging to engage councillors, such as VFM/ efficiency. Potentially each Scrutiny Lead would undertake this role within their portfolio. It is probably better decided on a topic base rather than a matter of course.

One Tower Hamlets (Lead: Cllr Ann Jackson)

Issue	Community leadership in Tower Hamlets	Method	Review
Lead officer	Lutfur Ali – Assistant Chief Executive		
Objective/outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify the policies, practices and services which impact upon Community Leadership role. • Establish the role and responsibilities of community leaders based on local needs. • Improve mechanisms for support, training and development and thus empower the local community. • Evaluate the role of partners in supporting community leadership roles. 		
Performance Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2008-09 Strategic Plan target is to improve the response time to members' enquires. • Local Government Act 2000 enshrined in law the role of local authorities as community leaders. It placed a duty on local authorities to produce community strategies for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their areas and to achieve sustainable development. 		
Other Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the Tower Hamlets Partnership to see how it encourages community involvement through the LAP steering groups. • Identify learning and development needs to see what is required to improve councillor's leadership role. • Councillors' Commission and other national initiatives to empower community leaders. 		
Other issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at ways to improve the support given to councillors that are in employment. • Address management and leadership role of third sector representatives. 		
OSC Criteria	<p>Meets criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would assist in addressing an area of national policy development that has significant implications for the Council and where member input would be valuable • Where there is gap between community perception or concern and objective performance and members adopting a more community leadership role would assist in managing this. 		

Safe and Supportive Community (Lead: Cllr Denise Jones)

Issue	Reducing Youth Offending	Method	Review
Lead officer	Mary Durkin – Children’s Services		
Objective/outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish how effective the work of the YOT has been with regard to youth crime prevention, Examine the effectiveness of the Partnership working in crime prevention. 		
Performance Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key performance indicator shows that more work is required to reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system. Target in 2007 was -5%, actual figure was -7.7%. Areas for improvement identified by the 2005 joint inspection of the YOT included strengthened performance management, victim and restorative justice work, and equality issues. Areas for improvement identified by assessment of performance in 2007-8, highlighted the following strategic issues: parenting interventions, victim work, education, employment and training and over-use of custody. 		
Other Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GLA population predictions show that there will be an increase of over 14,000 14-18 year olds by 2010 across the borough. Since 2003-4 the numbers of young people receiving a conviction, or admitting guilt and receiving a reprimand or final warning has risen from 435 to 543 in 2004-5, 573 in 2005-6 and 586 in 2006-7. The outcomes for Children outlined in Every Child Matters, emerging agendas under Care Matters, Targeted Youth Support, and the forthcoming legislation related to children, young people and crime. 		
OSC Criteria	<p>Meets criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would assist in addressing an area of national policy development that has significant implications for the Council and where member input would be valuable. Would help address a gap between community perception and concern. 		

Issue	Bullying in Schools	Method	Challenge Session
Lead Officer	Helen Jenner / Liz Vickerie – Children’s Services		
Objective/outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the local authority’s anti-bullying policy Establish the nature of the problem in Tower Hamlets compared to other areas Focus on the work carried out by the Council and its partners in tackling bullying; Consider anti-bullying policy around hate crime Examine reasons for bullying 		
Performance Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A key priority in the Children and Young People’s Plan theme of staying safe 		
Other Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members’ suggestion National and local area of concern 		

Prosperous Community (Lead: Cllr Abdul Aziz Sardar)

Issue	Reducing Worklessness Amongst Young People 16-24	Method	Review
Lead officer	Nick Smales - Development & Renewal		
Objective/outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine policies in place at national and local level aimed at reducing worklessness • Further develop understanding of barriers to employment for specific group • Examine how private sector organisations could be more involved in the employment of local people. • Examine the barriers faced by young women seeking employment • Analyse the impact of the recession on young adults locally 		
Performance Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains a key priority for improvement amongst Members. • Employment a key issues identified by a number of reviews. • SP308 a local performance indicator on percentage of young people aged 16-24 claiming unemployment-related benefits went up by 4.2% between 2007/08 and 2008/09. 		
Other Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tower Hamlets has had one of the fastest growing local economies, with a 48 per cent increase in jobs since 1998 but local people have not benefited as much as they could from this. • Unemployment remains high, and residents have one of the poorest level of health and life expectancy, and third highest level of deprivation in England. • Large investment in Working Neighbourhood Funding to reduce worklessness 		
Other issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tower Hamlets has one of the youngest and most diverse populations in the country. • Over half of the residents are classed as white British with the remainder from a range of ethnic minorities. The largest group of which is people of Bangladeshi origin. 		
OSC Criteria	<p>Meets criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would assist in tackling an area of poor or challenging performance that has priority within the council. • Where there is gap between community perception or concern and objective performance and members adopting a more community leadership role would assist in managing this. 		

A Great Place to Live (Lead: Cllr Alex Heslop)

Issue	Private Rented Sector	Method	Review
Lead officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aman Dalvi / Jackie Odunoye – Development and Renewal 		
Objective/outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the Council policy on private rented sector Develop proposals to improve assistance available to tenants Consider whether the Council should support private sector leasing Establish issues around private sector landlords 		
Performance Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving housing a key priority in the Community Plan Percentage of total private sector homes vacant for more than 6 months target not met in 07/08 with data not yet available for 08/09 		
Other Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National credit crunch impact High levels of overcrowding in the borough High number of leasehold properties rented out 		
OSC Criteria	<p>Meets criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> would assist in addressing an area of national policy development that has significant implications for the Council and where member input would be valuable would help address a gap between community perception or concern Would contribute particularly toward improving VFM 		

Issue	Council's Strategic Relationship with RSLs	Method	Challenge Session
Lead officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aman Dalvi / Jackie Odunoye – Development and Renewal 		
Objective/outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the Council's role in ensuring RSLs honour stock transfer terms Issues faced by local residents in dealing with RSLs 		
Other Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of representation made at full Council by local residents regarding RSLs Member suggestion 		
OSC Criteria	<p>Meets criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> where member input and understanding would assist with sustaining high performance that has priority within the Strategic Plan would assist in addressing an area of national policy development that has significant implications for the Council and where member input would be valuable would help address a gap between community perception or concern 		

Excellent Public Services (Lead: Cllr Bill Turner)

Issue	Dangerous Dogs	Method	Challenge Session
Lead officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andy Bamber - Communities, Localities & Culture 		
Objective/outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To evaluate the reasons for the increase in dangerous dogs • To evaluate the partnership approach to tackling the issue • Raise awareness and amongst all stakeholders 		
Performance Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues a key national indicator 		
Other Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of rising local and regional concern • Member suggestion 		
OSC Criteria	<p>Meets criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would help address a gap between community perception or concern and objective performance by utilising the members' leadership role • would assist in addressing an area of national policy development that has significant implications for the Council and where member input would be valuable 		

Healthy Community (Lead: Cllr Tim Archer)

Issue	Preventing Childhood Obesity	Method	Scrutiny Review
Lead officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owen Whalley – Development & Renewal • Tim Madelin – NHS Tower Hamlets 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the regulatory environment surrounding fast food outlets • Evaluate current potential actions the Partnership is considering to improve the impact of fast food outlets on health • Consider best practice examples from other local authorities in managing fast food outlets 		
Performance Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan 08-09 makes specific reference to improving people’s health and promoting healthy lifestyles. • (LAA) 51: Tackle obesity among primary school age children in year 6 		
Other Drivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Healthy lives: A cross Government Strategy for England’ to tackle the rise in obesity makes mention of using “planning powers to manage the number of fast food outlets” • Improving health and reducing differences in people’s health by promoting healthy lifestyles to slow down the increase in obesity is a key Community Plan priority • There are currently over 200 fast food outlets in the borough • Develop capacity of OSC to challenge and examine in detail performance information • Tower Hamlets part of healthy borough initiative 		
OSC Criteria	<p>Meets criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would assist in tackling an area of poor or challenging performance that has priority within the strategic plan • would assist in addressing an area of national policy development that has significant implications for the Council and where member input would be valuable • would help address a gap between community perception or concern and objective performance by utilising the members’ leadership role 		