Meeting: Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Date: 22 March 2005
Subject: Annual Work Programme
Responsible Officer: Paul Najsarek, Director Organisational Performance
Contact Officer: Susie Schwartz, Scrutiny Officer
Portfolio Holder: Health and Social Care
Key Decision: No
Status: Part I

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

That the sub-committee:
- Consider and agree a provisional work programme 2005-06;
- If appropriate, identify a maximum of two topics for provisional prioritisation for in-depth review by the committee;
- Identify a reserve list of up to two other potential topics for in-depth review;
- Identify further areas of potential interest for consideration during the course of the year;
- Out of these further areas of potential interest, identify three key priority areas; and
- Nominate Member(s) to liaise with officers in undertaking a feasibility study of these potential in-depth review topics.
Reason for report

The Constitution requires the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to report annually to full Council on its workings and to make recommendations for future work programmes and amend working methods, if appropriate.

This report discusses the formulation of the 2005-06 scrutiny work programme for the Sub-Committee. The sub-committee’s annual report requirement is considered in another agenda item at this meeting.

Once agreed the sub-committee’s work programme will be provided to Overview and Scrutiny for information.

Benefits

The sub-committee has the opportunity to contribute to the work of the council in a number of ways. By carefully structuring the work programme, the sub-committee has the opportunity to:

- Add significant value to local services.
- Be strategic in the areas it targets.
- Consider its work levels and any resource implications that may be present.

Cost of Proposals

The work programme will be managed within budget. No additional funding will be sought.

Risks

Failing to consider the work programme in detail may mean opportunities for scrutiny to contribute to the work of the council may be diminished.

Implications if recommendations rejected

The Overview and Scrutiny committee is required to agree a work programme each year. Each sub-committee contributes to this process by determining its own work programme and feeding this into the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Failure to provide this to Overview and Scrutiny would mean this committee would not be able to meet its Constitutional responsibilities.
Section 2: Report

2.1 Brief History

Guidelines and Criteria for Developing a Work Programme
In April 2004 the Overview and Scrutiny committee agreed the following set of guidelines and criteria for use when considering a work programme:

Guidelines for Determining the Work Programme

- The programme must be Member led, achievable and realistic
- Work should be balanced across the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Sub-Committees
- Having regard to officer resources and demands on Members’ time, each scrutiny body should conduct no more than 1 in-depth review at a time, as far as possible, and only commence a further review upon completion of the last
- Provision should be built into the work programme for consideration of the budget & statutory plans
- The programme should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate consideration of other issues if required
- Consideration should be given to building provision for Member training into the work programme
- The potential to produce quick wins should be taken into consideration

Criteria for Consideration when Developing the Work Programme

- Ability to ‘add value’ to the Council’s corporate aims and priorities and the outcomes thereof, with a view to improving the Council’s services/performance
- Potential to engage the public
- National priorities
- Strategic importance for the authority/local health bodies
- Existence of recent/planned other reviews/inspections

Consideration of these guidelines and criteria must be taken into account when developing the work programme.

Work Programme 2005/06

The Scrutiny Unit has developed a list of potential topics for consideration by the committee to help inform their discussions on a work programme for 2005/06.

In developing this list, the Scrutiny Unit has taken into consideration the criteria mentioned above. Suggestions for review have come from:

- Research by the Scrutiny Officer
- Review of service plans for the Council
- Consideration of items of importance carried over from the previous year’s work programme
• Consideration of national and local health and social care priorities
• Consideration of Patient and Public Involvement Forum priorities
• Meetings with relevant Directors; and
• Feedback from public in response to an item on the Harrow website.

Members of the sub-committee are also asked to contribute suggestions to the work programme.

The sub-committee may also be asked to consider items referred to it by Cabinet. There may also be items (e.g. reports, action plans) that come up from time to time that will need to be considered by the sub-committee. The work programme should therefore be flexible enough to accommodate these requests without compromising the ability of the committee to provide valuable input into these issues.

*Types of Scrutiny Intervention*

There are a number of ways a particular issue may be approach. Examples may include:

• Short or In-depth Reviews;
• Presentation from relevant experts; or
• Agenda Items for comment;

When reviewing items for the work programme, the sub-committee should also consider how the committee might best handle the item.

2.2 Consultation

As noted consultation has taken place with:

• Relevant directors;
• The community via Harrow’s website and local PPI forums;
• The Advisor to the sub-committee;

The Portfolio Holder is also in attendance at this meeting and will be able to input suggestions for consideration by the sub-committee.

2.3 Financial Implications

This report is not seeking additional financial resources. This programme of work will be delivered within existing budget provision.

2.4 Legal Implications

When considering items for its work programme, the sub-committee should note that Joint work with scrutiny committees from other boroughs may be required. Under the Local Authority (Overview and Scrutiny Committees Health Scrutiny Functions) Regulations 2002, NHS bodies have a duty to consult an overview and scrutiny committee on:
• any proposals it may have under consideration for any substantial
development of the health service in its area; or
• any proposal to make a substantial variation in the provision of such
services.

According to the Secretary of State’s direction issued on 17th July 2003,
health Overview and Scrutiny Committees must form joint Health Overview
and Scrutiny Committees to respond to consultations from the NHS about
proposals for developments or variations in services (affecting people in
more than one local authority area) that relevant health Overview and
Scrutiny Committees consider to be ‘substantial.’ Only a joint Overview
and Scrutiny committee may
• make comments of the proposal consulted on to the local NHS body
• require the local NHS body to provide information about the proposal
• require an officer or the local NHS body to attend before it to answer
questions about the proposals.

2.5 Equalities Impact

Scrutiny reviews make a significant contribution to the improvement of
services for Harrow’s multicultural community. When considering any item
on the work programme across the year, the sub-committee specifically
takes into consideration how to engage with and meet the diverse needs of
residents.

Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents

Appendix One Suggested topics for the Health and Social Care Work
Programme 2005/06