

Meeting: Integrated Housing Board

Date: 14 June 2010

Report Title: Overview & Scrutiny Liaison with Integrated Housing Board

Report From: Cllr Alexander

Purpose

- To update the board on the scrutiny lead role for HSP theme board.
- To update the Partnership Board on the draft work programme for 2010/11.

Background

Under the Local Government Act 2000 local authorities were required to set up an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This committee is able to scrutinise the decisions or actions taken by the Council or partner organisations or indeed, assess any matter that affects people living in Haringey.

In this context, the primary role of Overview and Scrutiny is to hold the Executive to account and to support the policy making function of the Council. As such, Overview and Scrutiny has a number of distinct roles:

- To review and challenge decisions taken by the Council and its partners
- To investigate services or policy areas which are of interest or concern to people in Haringey
- To make evidence based recommendations to help improve services provided by the Council and partner organisations.

In 2009/2010 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee aligned themselves with the Theme Boards of the Haringey Strategic Partnership. The aim was to assist in building close working relationships between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Haringey Strategic Partnership.

It is anticipated that improved liaison will ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissions task and finish reviews that add value to the work of the Board.

Legal/Financial Implications

Financial Implications

This report does not give rise to any immediate financial implications. However, it should be noted that where possible all scrutiny reviews commissioned by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will include a Value for Money assessment.

Legal Implications

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has powers to scrutinise decisions taken in the discharge of the Council's "executive" and "non-executive" functions and to make reports and recommendations to Cabinet and Full Council. This includes making reports and recommendations on matters relating to health services and other matters affecting the Borough or its inhabitants. The annual work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committee's is a matter of local choice.

Recommendations

That the Integrated Housing Board notes the content of this report.

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1. Alignment of scrutiny with the local strategic theme boards

- 1.1 One of the key roles of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review council performance, including the Local Area Agreement targets, and to make suggestions for improvement.
- 1.2 To help the Council and its partners achieve the objectives set out in the Local Area Agreement, members of Overview & Scrutiny have been aligned to the theme boards within the local strategic partnership. It is anticipated that this alignment will bring building close working relationship between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the strategic partnership.
- 1.3 Specifically, this alignment between the Committee and the Board may help to:
 - Identify areas where it may be beneficial for scrutiny involvement
 - Achieve goals of the local strategic partnership
 - Prevent duplication of work
 - Provide an independent and objective view of what needs to be done
 - Improve the quality of services provided to local people.

2. Scrutiny Lead Role

- 2.1 Each member of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is aligned to one of the theme boards in the local strategic partnership. The nominated Lead Member has a role to:
- Build a strong working relationship with all members of the board
 - Promote the role of Overview and Scrutiny within the membership of the board
 - Have an overview of LAA targets which the board is leading on, its performance, and action taken by the board in respect of exception reporting
 - Feed back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee key issues arising from the board and possible areas where scrutiny could add value
 - Chair “task and finish” reviews on topics within the theme board remit
 - Attend the quarterly board meetings as appropriate.

3. Overview and 2010/2011 work programme

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is in the process of agreeing a work programme for 2010/2011. The Committee plans to carry out one ‘Task and Finish’ review linked to each of the theme boards within the local strategic partnership.
- 3.2 The Committee recently met informally to discuss topics proposed for review and to short-list two topics per theme board area. The reviews currently being considered linked to the Integrated Housing Board include:
- RSL working in Haringey: performance of estate management and estate cleanliness
 - Routes of exit and flow of residents from temporary housing.
- 3.3 The Lead Scrutiny Member for the Integrated Housing Board is due to meet with relevant officers from the partnership to further consider the above options. As this is an on-going process, the Lead Scrutiny Member will be able to give a verbal update on progress and other areas linked to the Integrated Housing Board which will form part of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2010/11.
- 3.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee expects to finalise and commission its work programme at the first Committee meeting, due to be held on the 5th July 2010. A copy of this work programme will then be circulated to the board Members.