

Examples of work undertaken by Overview & Scrutiny Chairs

May 2008 – November 2008

Work Programme sessions – May 2008

At the beginning of this Municipal Year each Overview and Scrutiny Committee held a workshop session to determine individual work programmes for 2008-09. These sessions involved Council Officers and LSP Partnership Managers, who were invited to present information on current priorities and issues on their thematic and service areas. Following these sessions the Overview & Scrutiny Committees agreed to focus on the following areas for in-depth reviews:

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Performance & Corporate Services)

- Perception of Crime, with particular focus on the budgetary aspects of communication and marketing (with a link to the Street Scene agenda).
- Equality of access to services provided to members of the public

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services)

- Extended Schools Agenda
- Fostering – Recruitment and Retention Linked to Agency Staff
- Corporate Parenting – Member Visits to Care Homes

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration & Environmental Services)

- Community Involvement – Licensing Act
- Watercourse Maintenance and Flooding
- Asset Management Review of Library Service

Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Health & Social Care)

- Supported Housing Needs
- Analysis and Evaluation of Early Mechanisms in Health & Social Care Systems
- Core Standards Working Group (NHS Declarations to the Healthcare Commission)

Review of work programme sessions – November December 2008

Following the work programme session at the beginning of the Municipal Year each Overview and Scrutiny Committee held / are holding a workshop session to review current priorities and performance areas within their remit, in order to ensure that Members are focusing resources on the correct areas of work. Review of work programme sessions follow a similar format to the setting of work programmes at the beginning of the year, with informative presentations from Council and partnership officers.

**As Lead Members of Working Groups there is a requirement to undertake a lot of research and commit a certain level of time to undertaking an in-depth review. For example the ongoing Children's Services Working Group concerning fostering recruitment has resulted in the Chair working very closely with the O&S Team to identify research, draw out key issues, interview service users, visit service users at home, site visits at other authorities and drafting the final report and recommendations to Cabinet **

Chairing of Committees – normal committee cycle of meetings

Agenda setting meetings with O&S officers – in order to ensure information is not submitted to Committee for information only, that the items meet those criteria set out in the work programme and that the Chair, and Members, have clear ownership of the agenda.

Management Board meetings – Meetings have scheduled from June 2008 to March 2009 on a cycle of once every 4 – 6 weeks.

O&S Chairs Network – Chairs and Vic-Chairs are invited to the North West Chairs Network, where active participation is expected, for example recently one of our Chairs undertook a new training course and provided feedback to Members of the Network.

Learning & Development seminars – As Chairs of a developing function, with growing Government guidance and legislation regarding its future role, the Chairs of the O&S Committees are expected to participate in learning & development and ensure they are kept up to date with the growth of requirements for the function.