

**AGENDA ITEM: 9**

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Meeting	Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date	16 November 2011
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Task and Finish Groups / Scrutiny Panels – Recommendation Tracking</b>
Report of	Scrutiny Office
Summary	This report provides the Committee with an update on the implementation of recommendations made by Overview & Scrutiny Task & Finish Group accepted by Cabinet.

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Officer Contributors	John Murphy, Overview & Scrutiny Officer
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	All
Enclosures	Appendix A – Task & Finish Group Recommendations
For decision by	Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Contact for further information:

John Murphy, Overview & Scrutiny Officer, Corporate Governance Directorate

020 8359 2368, [john.murphy@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:john.murphy@barnet.gov.uk)

## **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That the Committee are requested to consider and comment on the progress made in implementing Task & Finish Group recommendations accepted by Cabinet, as set out in Appendix A.**

## **2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Panels and Task and Finish Groups must ensure that the work of Scrutiny is reflective of the Council's priorities.**
- 2.2 The three priority outcomes set out in the 2011-13 Corporate Plan are: –**
- Better services with less money**
  - Sharing opportunities, sharing responsibilities**
  - A successful London suburb**

## **3. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- 3.1 Cabinet, 12 April 2010, Decision 11 (Reference from Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee: Task and Finish Group: Homelessness and Young People)**
- 3.2 Cabinet, 12 April 2010, Decision 12 (Reference from Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee: Task and Finish Group Review: Road Resurfacing)**

## **4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 Failure to monitor the progress made by Cabinet/Officers in implementing recommendations made by Task & Finish Groups and Overview & Scrutiny Panels which have been accepted by Cabinet carries a reputational risk to the authority through a failure to demonstrate the outcomes from overview and scrutiny work.**

## **5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 5.1 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010 ("the Act"), the council has a legislative duty to have 'due regard' to eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations in the contexts of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, and maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.**
- 5.2 In addition to the Terms of Reference of the Committee, and in so far as relating to matters within its remit, the responsibility of the Committee is to perform the Overview and Scrutiny role in relation to:**

- The Council's leadership role in relation to diversity and inclusiveness; and
- The fulfilment of the Council's duties as employer including recruitment and retention, personnel, pensions and payroll services, staff development, equalities and health and safety.

## **6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 6.1 Task and Finish Group reviews have the scope to consider value for money issues which identify how well the Council is managing and using its resources to deliver value for money and better and more sustainable outcomes for local people.
- 6.2 Where there are financial implications linked to recommendations, these are worked through using Services existing budgets

## **7. LEGAL ISSUES**

- 7.1 Under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's executive arrangements are required to include provision for appointment of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee with specified powers, including the power to make recommendations in respect of council functions. In respect of the exercise of the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee's powers to coordinate and monitor the work of overview and scrutiny task and finish groups / scrutiny panels, it is good practice to monitor the progress and impact of recommendations made.

## **8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS**

- 8.1 The scope of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees is contained within Part 2, Article 6 of the Council's Constitution.
- 8.2 The Terms of Reference of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees are set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Part 4 of the Constitution).
- 8.3 Item 8 of Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference states that its role is to:

"To coordinate and monitor the work of scrutiny panels and task and finish groups, including considering reports and recommendations and referring to the relevant decision-making body."

## **9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 9.1 In May 2009, the council adopted a 'task and finish' group approach to some of their overview and scrutiny work. Council agreed that task and finish groups would be time-limited to ensure that recommendations were made to the relevant decision-making body in a timely manner. On the whole, task

and finish groups have completed their work over a three-month period. However, this timescale is flexible where circumstances mean that a review should be run over a shorter or extended period.

9.2 Since May 2009, a total of eleven task and finish groups and scrutiny panels have concluded their work on the following topics:-

- Enterprise in the Borough (3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010)
- School Places Planning (3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010)
- Advice Provision in the Borough (22<sup>nd</sup> February 2010)
- Homelessness and Young People (12<sup>th</sup> April 2010)
- Road Resurfacing (12<sup>th</sup> April 2010)
- Recycling and Waste Minimisation (6<sup>th</sup> September 2010)
- Remodelling Older People's Housing with Support (20<sup>th</sup> October 2010)
- Council's Response to Cold Weather (20<sup>th</sup> October 2010)
- Housing Allocations Overview and Scrutiny Panel (10<sup>th</sup> January 2011)
- Domestic Violence (7<sup>th</sup> March 2011)
- Fostering Recruitment (14<sup>th</sup> September 2011)

Dates that these groups reported their findings to Cabinet are detailed in brackets.

9.3 Further task and finish groups have recently completed their work or are ongoing on the following topics:-

- Early Intervention and Prevention Services (Children's Services)
- Contract Monitoring and Community Benefit
- Carbon Footprint
- Secondary School Places Overview and Scrutiny Panel

9.4 In order for the Committee to have an effective oversight of the work of task and finish groups, it is important for council services (or external bodies) to evidence the extent to which recommendations accepted by the Cabinet (or external agency) have been implemented. To this end, the Scrutiny Office requested that services provide an update on the implementation of accepted recommendations at six-monthly intervals (from the date of reporting to Cabinet or external agency).

9.5 The Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee received reports at their meetings on 1<sup>st</sup> November and 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010, and on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 11<sup>th</sup> April and September 5<sup>th</sup> 2011 (Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee replaced the sub-committee March 2011) which provided the six and 12 month updates on progress made in implementing task and finish recommendations from the following task and finish groups:-

- Remodelling Older Peoples Housing with Support;

Key:

Green = fully implemented

Amber = partially implemented

Red = no progress or significant delay in implementation

<b>Road Resurfacing Task and Finish Group – Cabinet, 12 April 2010</b>			
<b>Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Contact Officers</b>
<p>The Scheme Prioritisation Procedure for Planned Highways Maintenance Programme, approved by Cabinet on the 22nd July 2002, should be reviewed and amended in accordance with current best practice. The Task and Finish Group recommended that the Council introduce a Highways Asset Management approach to achieve best value for investment in the highways infrastructure.</p>	<b>Amber</b>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendation:</u> “That the recommendations of this Task and Finish Group were in general very helpful and constructive, and tribute be given to the Group for their work. Cabinet agreed with the Group that there is a more efficient way of running the road resurfacing programme and that the asset management system being proposed is the way forward. The additional recommendations in c) i) and ii) of the Group’s report must be subject to resources being available.”</p> <p><u>Update December 2010:</u> The implementation of the Asset Management approach has been delayed due to the pooling of resources onto the Pot Hole Elimination Programme. It is anticipated that the Project will be established early in the new year.</p> <p><u>Update March 2011:</u> The restructure of Highways is well under way and is expected to be in place in April 2011. This will facilitate the introduction of a Highways Asset Management Plan, which is also referred to in the Service Plan. A gap analysis is currently under way, the first step in installing an Asset Management System. It is anticipated that next year’s planned highways maintenance programme (2012/13) will be produced using the Asset Management System.</p> <p><u>Update November 2011:</u> The Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) is currently being prepared and the target of preparing the 2012/13 highways maintenance programme using HAMP is achievable.</p>	<p>Chris Chrysostomou, Chief Engineer – Infrastructure, Environment &amp; Operations</p>

Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>The Task and Finish Group conclude that arrangements for monitoring the quality of sub-contactors work against the contract specification are adequate and recommend retention of the existing arrangements.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendation:</u>            “That the recommendations of this Task and Finish Group were in general very helpful and constructive, and tribute be given to the Group for their work. Cabinet agreed with the Group that there is a more efficient way of running the road resurfacing programme and that the asset management system being proposed is the way forward. The additional recommendations in c) i) and ii) of the Group’s report must be subject to resources being available.”</p> <p><u>Update December 2010:</u>            Existing arrangements will continue as recommended although monitoring resources will be reduced as part of the budget saving process.</p> <p><u>Update March 2011:</u>            The proposed Highways restructure redistributes the monitoring staff to cover all aspects of highways maintenance, including Responsive Maintenance, to ensure the quality of monitoring of all sub-contractors work is maintained.</p> <p><u>Update November 2011:</u>            The restructure allocated one Clerk of Works to specifically monitor the quality of work produced by the responsive subcontractor, as this was an area identified with no monitoring.</p>	<p>Chris Chrysostomou, Chief Engineer – Infrastructure, Environment &amp; Operations</p>

Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>The Task and Finish Group recommend that:</p> <p>i) a full survey be undertaken of the boroughs footways to enable footways schemes to be prioritised effectively; and</p> <p>ii) footways maintenance works should be carried out, as far as possible, to consistent standard across the network, using the same materials wherever possible.</p>	<b>Amber</b>	<p><u>Cabinet response to recommendation:</u> “That the recommendations of this Task and Finish Group were in general very helpful and constructive, and tribute be given to the Group for their work. Cabinet agreed with the Group that there is a more efficient way of running the road resurfacing programme and that the asset management system being proposed is the way forward. The additional recommendations in c) i) and ii) of the Group’s report must be subject to resources being available.”</p> <p><u>Update December 2010:</u> The survey has been commissioned and is due to be completed by the end of the calendar year. It is considered appropriate to produce a proposed schedule of materials to be used and considered to be the standard across the network. The Cabinet Member will be consulted to gain agreement of this approach.</p> <p><u>Update March 2011:</u> A full survey of the borough’s footways has been completed and used as a basis to prepare the planned highways maintenance programme for 2011/12. Planned Footway maintenance is carried out using standard materials across the network. The Cabinet Member has requested that the Highways department concentrate on carriageways rather than footways and, consequently, the current and future footway maintenance budgets are expected to be low.</p> <p><u>Update November 2011:</u> A full condition survey of all the Borough Footways was carried out this financial year (2010/11)</p> <p>No Borough funded footway maintenance work was carried out this financial year. However, footway maintenance work was carried out funded by LIP funding.</p>	<p>Chris Chrysostomou, Chief Engineer – Infrastructure, Environment &amp; Operations</p>

## Homelessness and Young People Task and Finish Group – Cabinet, 12 April 2010

Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)	Status	Information	Contact Officers
<p>That Children and Housing Services develop a Youth Homelessness Prevention Strategy for young people at risk of homelessness.</p>	<p><b>Amber</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet resolution:</u>                      “That Cabinet thanked the Task and Finish Group for their report which was very helpful and welcomed their recommendations. The only issue raised was that Recommendations 1 and 5 appeared to duplicate the Children and Young People’s Plan.”</p> <p><u>Update December 2010:</u>                      Cabinet concern about duplication was recognised and a joint Commissioning Plan and Action Plan agreed. A strategic commissioning group has been established and a young person’s pathway group is progressing this work. In addition Children’s Services have commissioned National Care Advisory Service to assist on the development of the accommodation pathway for young people who are looked after, leaving care or in housing need.</p> <p><u>Update March 2011:</u>                      The work of National Care Advisory Service is almost complete and is indicating that supply of accommodation and demand is in balance (taking account of planned provision and changes to Barbara Langstone House) but that there is still work to do to re shape some of the services to meet the needs of young people more effectively. The Commissioning Plan and Action Plan will be reviewed in light of these recommendations.</p> <p><u>Update November 2011:</u>                      Commissioning priorities agreed following recommendations from NCAS are now being implemented; the first stage is re-configuring of three services through procurement. New contracts will be in place for 2012/13. The Commissioning Plan and Action Plan continue to be kept under review.</p>	<p>James Taylor,                      Deputy Head of Strategic Commissioning, Adult Social Services</p> <p>Sue Tomlin,                      Strategy and Business Improvement Manager, Planning, Housing and Regeneration</p> <p>Flo Armstrong                      Divisional Manager Youth Support Service, Children's Service</p>



Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>That a pilot is undertaken extending the period of short stay at the Crash Pad from a maximum of three to four weeks, to enable young people and support staff further time to work through problems.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet resolution:</u>            “That Cabinet thanked the Task and Finish Group for their report which was very helpful and welcomed their recommendations. The only issue raised was that Recommendations 1 and 5 appeared to duplicate the Children and Young People’s Plan.”</p> <p><u>Update December 2010:</u>            This is underway and being monitored.</p> <p><u>Update March 2011:</u>            The impact of increasing the length of stay has been to improve the quality of the mediation and opportunity for a cooling off period. There has been no discernable impact on availability of the Crash Pad resource, but demand and supply will continue to be monitored.</p> <p><u>Update November 2011:</u>            No change but Crash Pad services subject to procurement (see above). More flexibility, clearer outputs and increased emphasis will be placed on performance reporting through the new contract.</p>	<p>James Taylor,            Deputy Head of Strategic Commissioning, Adult Social Services</p> <p>Sue Tomlin,            Strategy and Business Improvement Manager, Planning, Housing and Regeneration</p> <p>Flo Armstrong            Divisional Manager Youth Support Service, Children's Service</p>

Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>That onsite support is provided at Barbara Langstone House, through more effective redeployment of support staff. This support should be made available outside traditional office hours to encourage young homeless people to engage with support services. The feasibility of providing starter packs to homeless young people at Barbara Langston House – including bedding and kitchen equipment – be investigated.</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet Resolution:</u>            “That Cabinet thanked the Task and Finish Group for their report which was very helpful and welcomed their recommendations. The only issue raised was that Recommendations 1 and 5 appeared to duplicate the Children and Young People’s Plan.”</p> <p><u>Update December 2010:</u>            The issues regarding support and continued use of Barbara Langstone House are being addressed through the Rapid Improvement Project which has agreed a number of changes to the operation of the accommodation; this includes support staff from current services being based on site with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> December 2010.</p> <p><u>Update March 2011:</u>            The on site support and other changes to the operation of Barbara Langstone House are beginning to have a positive impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome pack now includes bedding</li> <li>• A small budget has been agreed for small practical funding to help engage young people through the drop in e.g. small exercise equipment</li> <li>• Five young people have been supported to apply for University and</li> <li>•</li> <li>• interviews</li> <li>• Five have returned home through mediation and reality checking</li> <li>• Information sharing protocol in place which has resulted in better information about clients</li> <li>• Engagement with young people now starts from the initial visit and pre visit assessment. Views and culture is changing as young people see the benefits of engaging with services and support</li> <li>• Laundry facilities have been installed</li> <li>• There is now a regular senior management presence at the scheme</li> <li>• Proposals to make use of outside space for gardening and horticulture with support from Community Barnet and volunteers are being put together.</li> </ul>	<p>James Taylor,            Deputy Head of Strategic Commissioning, Adult Social Services</p> <p>Sue Tomlin,            Strategy and Business Improvement Manager, Planning, Housing and Regeneration</p> <p>Flo Armstrong            Divisional Manager Youth Support Service, Children's Service</p>

		<p><u>Update November 2011</u></p> <p>No change to the March update, however the entire project is to be reviewed shortly where evidence of the outcomes the project team has achieved will be assessed against the original objectives of the project. There has not been sufficient evidence that supports the need for the workers at Barbara Langstone House to change from traditional working hours to flexible hours as the needs of support needs of the tenants have largely been met within the current working day. This issue will be looked at again as part of the review that will take place.</p>	
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Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>That the new Notting Hill Housing Trust contract for floating support be regularly monitored and reviewed at 12 months</p>	<p><b>Green</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet Resolution:</u>            "That Cabinet thanked the Task and Finish Group for their report which was very helpful and welcomed their recommendations. The only issue raised was that Recommendations 1 and 5 appeared to duplicate the Children and Young People's Plan."</p> <p><u>Update December 2010:</u>            A project group representing the range of corporate interests in the contract is in place to monitor Notting Hill Housing Trust's performance and to develop the service. A comprehensive service review will be undertaken in Q1 2011/12.</p> <p><u>Update March 2011:</u>  <i>Update to follow.</i></p> <p><u>Update November 2011:</u>            A review of the Outreach Barnet floating support contract has been carried out and has concluded that performance is generally satisfactory although some areas for development have been identified. Recommendations for an improvement plan are the subject of current discussion with Notting Hill Housing Trust and corporate stakeholders.</p>	<p>James Taylor,            Deputy Head of Strategic Commissioning, Adult Social Services</p> <p>Sue Tomlin,            Strategy and Business Improvement Manager, Planning, Housing and Regeneration</p> <p>Flo Armstrong            Divisional Manager Youth Support Service, Children's Service</p>

Recommendation to Cabinet (accepted)	Status	Information	Contact Officer
<p>That a feasibility study is undertaken to look at move-on accommodation options for young homeless people utilising properties in the private sector to support young people who require a lower level of support .</p>	<p><b>Amber</b></p>	<p><u>Cabinet Resolution:</u>            “That Cabinet thanked the Task and Finish Group for their report which was very helpful and welcomed their recommendations. The only issue raised was that Recommendations 1 and 5 appeared to duplicate the Children and Young People’s Plan.”</p> <p><u>Update December 2010:</u>            This project is being progressed however there have been considerable difficulties engaging landlords and RSL partners, discussions are however continuing. Children’s Services are also working on a framework agreement for procurement of accommodation and this will include shared houses.</p> <p><u>Update March 2011:</u>            Significant changes to the housing benefits system have affected progress in developing shared accommodation. However a recent bid to the Department for Communities and Local Government for Homelessness Prevention Grant (Young People) has been successful and a small amount of funding has been allocated to progress the project. The framework agreement continues to include shared houses.</p> <p><u>Update November 2011:</u>            The evaluation of the first stage of bidders under the framework agreement is being assessed. A pilot of the shared house project is being undertaken and work is on-going to locate a suitable property. Continuing uncertainty on changes to the housing benefits system may affect the long term viability of the project.</p>	<p>James Taylor,            Deputy Head of Strategic Commissioning, Adult Social Services</p> <p>Sue Tomlin,            Strategy and Business Improvement Manager, Planning, Housing and Regeneration</p> <p>Flo Armstrong            Divisional Manager Youth Support Service, Children's Service</p>

- Council's Response to Cold Weather;
- Housing Allocations Overview and Scrutiny Panel;
- Recycling and Waste Minimisation;
- Road Resurfacing;
- Recycling and Waste Minimisation;
- School Places Planning; and
- Advice Provision in the Borough

9.6 Updates are now due in relation to the following task and finish groups and overview and scrutiny panels:

- Homelessness and Young People; and
- Road Resurfacing

9.7 A period of 18 months has now elapsed since the task and finish groups (referred to at 9.2 above) submitted their reports and recommendations to Cabinet. Accordingly, the next update is now due to be reported to the Committee.

9.8 An update from services is set out at **Appendix A**. The Committee are requested to comment on information provided in the update report.

## 10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None.