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**Meeting** Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Date** 7 October 2013

**Subject** **Task and Finish Group Updates**

**Report of** Scrutiny Office

**Summary** This report provides an update on the progress of the current Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups

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**Officer Contributors** Andrew Charlwood, Overview & Scrutiny Manager

**Status (public or exempt)** Public

**Wards Affected** All

**Function of** Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Enclosures** None

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## **1. RECOMMENDATION**

**1.1 That the Committee note the progress of the currently convened Task and Finish Groups.**

**1.2 That the Committee consider potential topics for the next round of Task and Finish Groups.**

## **2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

2.1 Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 7 February 2013, Task and Finish Group Updates

2.2 Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 2 May 2013, Review of Effectiveness of Task and Finish Groups – the Committee considered a report on the effectiveness of Task and Finish Groups and agreed the following amendments to procedures:

“The Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree to make the following changes to the management of Task and Finish Group Reviews:

- Develop arrangements for Scrutiny Members and members of the public to highlight topical and/or timely issues and for these to be prioritised in the Task and Finish Group work programme under the leadership of the Chairman of the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Reduce bureaucracy around convening and appointing Members to enable a more flexible approach to be taken.
- Encourage Group Secretaries to appoint Members to Task and Finish Groups based on personal and professional skill sets.
- For each suggested review, a Feasibility Study should be completed before the review progresses to ensure that the review is timely and will add value.
- Ensure that Task and Finish Groups have an external focus

*The Group have concluded that the management of Task and Finish Group reviews has become overly bureaucratic resulting in: timely and topical reviews not progressing quickly enough; reviews taking too long to be established; a lack of support from the political groups when appointing Members; a lack of public engagement with the review process; and reviews taking too long to complete. The Group emphasised the importance of the role of the Chairman of the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee in prioritising reviews and ensuring an appropriate level of support to ensure that they are timely and achieve positive outcomes.”*

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

3.1 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.

- 3.2 The three key priorities set out in the 2013–16 Corporate Plan are: –
- Supporting families and individuals that need it – promoting independence, learning and wellbeing;
  - Improving the satisfaction of residents and businesses with the London Borough of Barnet as a place to live, work and study; and
  - Promoting responsible growth, development and success across the borough.

- 3.3 In relation to the **NHS Health Checks Task and Finish Group**, the following outcomes and targets are relevant to the work of the Group:

“To sustain a strong partnership with the local NHS, so that families and individuals can maintain and improve their physical and mental health; and

“We will work with the local NHS to encourage people to keep well by increasing the availability of health and lifestyle checks for those aged between 40 and 74, and promoting better use of green space and leisure facilities to increase physical activity.”

“Increase the number of eligible people who receive an NHS Health Check to 7,200”

- 3.4 In relation to the **Early Years Review Task and Finish Group**, the following corporate priorities, outcomes and targets are relevant to the work of the Group:

“To create better life chances for children and young people across the borough” by “Working with families during the early years of a child’s life can have a positive impact for the future. We aim to identify and support vulnerable families, using children’s centres to support those with the greatest need and work preventatively with those on the cusp of becoming vulnerable or at risk.” The following target is relevant to the review “Increase the number of early years places available for eligible two year olds from 350 to 700”

- 3.5 In relation to the **Your Choice Barnet Task and Finish Group**, the following corporate priorities, outcomes and targets are relevant to the work of the Group:

“Support families and individuals that need it – promoting independence, learning and well-being.”

“To promote a healthy, active, independent and informed over 55 population in the borough so that Barnet is a place that encourages and supports residents to age well.”

“Our aim is to give all users of adult social care services choice and control over the services they receive and the decisions that affect them. We will do this by supporting eligible users of social care services to take personal

budgets, and to spend them in a way that benefits them the most, enabling them to decide the support they receive.”

#### **4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 Failure to address issues of public concern through the overview and scrutiny process may also result in reputational damage to the Council.

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

- 5.1 Under the Equality Act 2010 (“the Act”), the council and all other organisations exercising public functions on its behalf must have due regard to the need to: a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; b) advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without; and c) promote good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without. The ‘protected characteristics’ referred to are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy; maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. The duty to eliminate discrimination also extends to marriage and civil partnership.
- 5.2 In addition to the Terms of Reference of the Committee, and in so far as relating to matters within its remit, the role 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.
- 5.3 Task and Finish Groups will need to take into account equalities considerations throughout the lifecycle of the review and through the ongoing monitoring, via the Scrutiny Office, by implementation of accepted recommendations.

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

- 6.1 Task and Finish Group reviews must take into consideration value for money considerations when conducting their work, including the costs and benefits (both financial and non-financial) associated with any recommendations made by the Group. The costs associated with administering the task and finish group reviews will be met within existing resources in the governance service.

## **7. LEGAL ISSUES**

- 7.1 Any legal considerations as they relate to individual Task and Finish Group reviews will be addressed at the commencement and throughout the review process.

## **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 7 and 8 of Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference states that:

"The role of the Committee is to:

Appoint scrutiny panels and Task and Finish Groups needed to facilitate the overview and scrutiny function" and 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 NHS Health Checks Task and Finish Group**

- 9.1.1 In April 2013, the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) launched a programme to support local authority scrutiny functions to review their local approach to NHS Health Check and improve take up. A bid for support was made by the London Boroughs of Barnet and Harrow (who have a shared Public Health function) and the bid was successful. Work on this project will take place between June and November 2013. This project will be managed by scrutiny officers from Barnet and Harrow and will link directly to each council's overview and scrutiny committees. Support for the project will primarily be provided a CfPS Expert Adviser and the Joint Director for Public Health. In accepting the support offer, Barnet and Harrow have committed to the following:

- Completing the review by November 2013
- Using the CfPS Return on Investment model
- Participate in Knowledge Hub online discussions
- Keep an action log which will be utilised to co-produce a case study
- Participate in Action Learning Events

9.1.2 NHS Health Checks are a mandatory service which local authority public health functions have been required to deliver from 1 April 2013. Participation in the CfPS Health Checks programme provides both Barnet and Harrow with an opportunity to:

- Review previous performance;
- Consider the budget envelope, planned approach and commissioning strategy for both authorities;
- Utilise the support of an independent expert advisor;
- Enable engagement with commissioners, health service professionals (particularly GPs) and service users to understand perceptions of Health Checks;
- Enable Scrutiny Members to assist health and wellbeing boards, clinical commissioning groups and the Director of Public Health to develop the strategic approach Health Checks; and
- Identify the potential impact of improved uptake of the Health Checks by applying the CfPS ROI model to the review.

9.1.3 The Task and Finish Group review is seeking to:

- Identify ways in which NHS Health Checks can be promoted within each borough under the leadership of the Joint Director of Public Health;
- Explore the extent to which NHS services promote the NHS Health Checks to eligible residents;
- Consider the capacity of GPs, local pharmacies or other suitable settings to undertake Health Checks;
- Determine the extent to which secondary services are available to those who have been identified as having undetected health conditions or identified as being at risk of developing conditions without lifestyle changes;
- Identify examples of best practice from across England to inform the approach of Barnet and Harrow to commissioning and monitoring the NHS Health Checks Programme; and
- Utilise the CfPS ROI model to undertake an analysis of the cost/benefit of the NHS Health Checks Programme. The outcomes from this will influence the review recommendations.
- Explore whether GPs could be organised on a cluster basis to deliver NHS Health Checks in each borough.

9.1.4 The joint Barnet / Harrow Task and Finish Group met on 18 September 2013 to receive a summary of activity to date, review and agree the project plan, receive the results of a data mapping exercise undertaken by the public health team and to agree the approach to engaging with key stakeholders and residents / patients.

9.1.5 The Barnet Members of the Task and Finish Group are Councillors Alison Cornelius, Graham Old and Barry Rawlings.

9.1.6 The Committee will receive a verbal update on any further progress with the review at the meeting.

## **9.2 Early Years Task and Finish Group**

9.2.1 An initial meeting of the Task and Finish Group took place on 22 May 2013, where Councillor Gordon was elected as the Chairman. The other Members of the Task and Finish Group are: Councillors K Salinger, Coakley Webb, Marshall and Andreas Ioannidis.

9.2.2 A formal meeting on Task and Finish Group took place on 27 June 2013 to which considered:

- Requirements for Children's Centres;
- Local Authorities' statutory duties in relation to Children's Centres;
- New Ofsted Framework;
- Changes in the Ofsted inspection format;
- External evaluation of the impact and service delivery of children's centres (Hempsall Consultancies); and
- Universal and Targeted Services.

9.2.3 Two planned site visits to Children's Centres, nursery schools, nursery school classes (Private and Voluntary) have taken place. On 9 July 2013, Members of the Group visited: Fairway Children's Centre; West Hendon Pre-School; Underhill Infant School; and Children's Centre. On 18 July 2013, Members of the Group visited: Brookhill Nursery School; Mill Hill Pre-School; and Moss Hall Nursery School.

9.2.4 On 17 September 2013, Members of the Task and Finish Group conducted an evidence gathering visit to a Children's Centre in Brighton and Hove. Brighton and Hove are seen as a 'best practice' example of a health led integrated model for Children's Centres. By developing this model, Brighton and Hove have increased early identification and targeting of families, improved engagement with hard to reach families and a reduced in the numbers going on to other social care services, such as looked after children or onto a child protection plan.

9.2.5 A meeting of the Group is scheduled to take place on 21 October 2013. At this meeting, the group will:

- Discuss the headline findings of the market research undertaken by the Children's Service.
- Consider the current draft of the Children's Service Phase One report in relation to the Early Years Review to enable the Group to make comments in advance of any formal decision making.
- Receive an outline of the council's statutory duties in relation to childcare.

9.2.6 It is proposed that a further meeting of the Group takes place following the 21 October 2013 meeting to enable Members to refine their recommendations.

The final report of the Group will be drafted in November 2013 in preparation for reporting to the Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 January 2013 and Cabinet on February 2014.

### **9.3 Your Choice Barnet Task and Finish Group**

9.3.1 At its meeting of 3 July 2013 the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group to review the business case for Your Choice Barnet.

9.3.2 The Members that have been appointed to this group are: Councillors Braun (Chairman), B Salinger, Khatri, Rawlings and Mittra. The Group held its initial meeting on 23 July 2013 to consider the scope and approach to the review. At the meeting, it was agreed that review would undertake an independent analysis of the Business Case and current performance of Your Choice Barnet (a wholly owned local authority trading company) to enable an impartial analysis with balanced and evidence based recommendations made to the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

9.3.3 At its meeting of 12 August 2013, the Group considered reports from staff and senior officers on Your Choice Barnet which provided background and context to the original business case and the rationale for the decision to set up the local authority trading company, together with an update on performance and forward plans. This was followed by a presentation from the Head of Finance for Adults & Communities giving his assessment of the business case and financial performance.

9.3.4 At its meeting of 3 September 2013, the Group:

- Reviewed Care Quality Commission reports for Valley Way Respite Service and Barnet Supported Living Services;
- Considered Case study reports of three other Local Authorities that had differing local authority trading company experiences; and
- Agreed to visit Your Choice Barnet service sites on Tuesday 17 September.

9.3.5 A final meeting is planned to take place on 23 September where the Group will sum up their findings and agree any recommendations to be included in the final report.

## **10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 None

<b>Cleared by Finance (Officer's initials)</b>	<b>JH/AD</b>
<b>Cleared by Legal (Officer's initials)</b>	<b>MA</b>