
Meeting	Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date	18 th April 2012
Subject	Task and Finish Group Appointments
Report of	Scrutiny Office
Summary	This report proposes the establishment and appointment of Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups.

Officer Contributors	Melissa James, Scrutiny Officer
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	All
Enclosures	None
For decision by	Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the proposals for Task and Finish Group Reviews as set out in this report and establish and make appointments to three Task and Finish Groups.**

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 Annual Council, 19 May 2009, Agenda Item 13.2.1, Report of the Special (Constitution Review) Committee, Overview and Scrutiny: New Arrangements
- 2.2 Policy & Performance Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 2 June 2010, Agenda Item 7 (Overview & Scrutiny Appointments)
- 2.3 Business Management Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 8th March 2012, Agenda Item 10 (Any other Item the Chairman Decides are Urgent)

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 priority outcomes set out in the 2012/13 Corporate Plan are: –
- Better services with less money
 - Sharing opportunities, sharing responsibilities
 - A successful London suburb

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 A failure to monitor the Council's key priorities and improvement initiatives may result in reduced service quality and lower customer satisfaction. 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 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010 ("the Act"), the Council has a legislative duty to have 'due regard' to:
- eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
 - advancing equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without and
 - fostering good relations in the contexts of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regards to eliminating discrimination

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.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

7.1 None in the context of this report.

7.2 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 Since May 2009, 14 Task and Finish Group reviews have been completed. During the same period, an additional three Overview and Scrutiny Panels have been set up. Cabinet is scheduled to receive the final reports of the four most recent Task and Finish Group reviews at their meeting on 4th April 2012. Accordingly, resources are now available within the Scrutiny Office to support the next tranche of reviews.
- 9.2 Members have been requested to identify potential topics for Task and Finish Group reviews for the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider. Details of suggested topics are set out at below.

Topic for Task and Finish Group	Summary of Proposal
Children’s Centres	In-depth analysis of the role of Children’s Centres and their contribution to delivering the Council’s Early Intervention Strategy and supporting the Safer Families Project.
Fuel Poverty	Examine the issue of fuel poverty in Barnet (including number of residents classified as being in fuel poverty, financial / health impacts of fuel poverty and level of support available to assist residents).
Effectiveness of Task and Finish Groups	Examine the effectiveness of the Task and Finish Group reviews completed since May 2009. Review to consider effectiveness of: holding the Executive to account; success in developing policy and/or driving service improvements; and an evaluation of the impact of recommendations.
Road Safety	Examine the safety of Barnet’s roads, including accident statistics and potential cost effective road safety improvements
Affordability of Housing/ Empty Properties	Examine the affordability of housing in Barnet and the number of empty properties in the borough.
Tree Preservation Orders	Review of the current policies and their implementation. Particular consideration to be given to why the Council should take on unlimited

	liabilities in pursuing this policy (e.g. a tree is on private land and by imposing a Tree Preservation Order we are committed to spend thousands of pounds when the matter could be settled by civil processes)
Public Health Transition	Review to consider the Council's response to the transfer of responsibility for public health from the NHS to local authorities.
School Governors	Examine the role of school governors, legal responsibilities and identify examples of best practice for application in Barnet.

9.3 The Committee are requested to establish and appoint to three further Task and Finish Groups and to indicate their preference for the order in which these groups commence their work.

9.4 Any review recommended to go forward will be subject to an initial feasibility study to consider inputs, timescales, costs and potential outcomes.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

Legal – JKK
Finance MC/JH