

KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP

5 July 2006

Consultation on the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Programme for 2006-2007

This paper invites the KCP Steering Group to:

- suggest potential topics for Overview & Scrutiny and give reasons why they should be included in the Scrutiny Programme.

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of Overview and Scrutiny is to hold the Executive to account and help drive improvements to services, ensuring that they meet the needs of the community. This role is undertaken in the Royal Borough by five Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs), who
 - Monitor the Council's decision making process;
 - Scrutinise existing policies and the implementation of policies;
 - Participate in the development of new policies;
 - Monitor the performance of the Council and its partners
 - Investigate the quality of services provided by the Council.
- 1.2 Councillors are not just interested in the services provided by the Council. All public service providers (the NHS, the public utilities, government agencies) whose decisions and actions have an impact on local residents may be of legitimate interest to Councillors. However, whereas the Council has a statutory duty to hold local NHS organisations to account, it has no such powers in relation to other agencies. But in practice, OSCs across the country have found that public service providers such as the Post Office, the Utilities, the Police, Job Centres, even commercial companies such as mobile phone providers, have been willing to engage with OSCs as the elected representatives of their local communities.
- 1.3 The Royal Borough has five OSCs : Cabinet & Corporate Services OSC; Family & Children's Services OSC; Housing, Environmental Health & Adult Care OSC; Public Realm OSC and Health OSC. In previous years they have dealt with a wide range of issues, including looking at:

- Access to Services for Disabled People
 - The London Fire Brigade plans for local Fire services
 - Developing the Council's Parks Strategy in collaboration with the Executive
 - Hospital Acquired Infections in the local hospital
 - Improving Employment opportunities for local residents
 - Police Community Support Officers
 - Public hearing on the redevelopment of Holland Park School
 - Scrutiny of the Children & Young people's plan jointly with local young people
 - Review of Benefit take-up in the Royal Borough
 - Post Office closures
 - Public meetings to discuss the PCT's financial recovery plan
 - Public hearing on the impact of radio masts
 - Public hearing on the closure of the Chenies Day Centre for children with severe disabilities
- 1.4 The work of Overview & Scrutiny Committees in the Royal Borough has enabled the public voice to be heard, highlighted issues of public concern and given decision makers the opportunity to explain and if necessary review their decisions.

2. Consultation on the Annual Programme

- 2.1 Every year the Council consults the public, its partners, Councillors and Business Groups on what should be included in its Scrutiny work programme. This is an opportunity for members of the Kensington & Chelsea Partnership Steering Group to bring to the attention of Councillors any matters that they wish to be examined by Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
- 2.2 All suggestions will go before Overview & Scrutiny Committees for decision at their September round of meetings.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 Members of the KCP Steering Group are invited to suggest potential topics for Overview & Scrutiny and give reasons why they should be included in the Scrutiny Programme.

FOR DISCUSSION

Contact Officer:

Ahmed Farooqui
 Scrutiny Development Manager
Ahmed.Farooqui@rbkc.gov.uk
 Phone: 020 7361 2634